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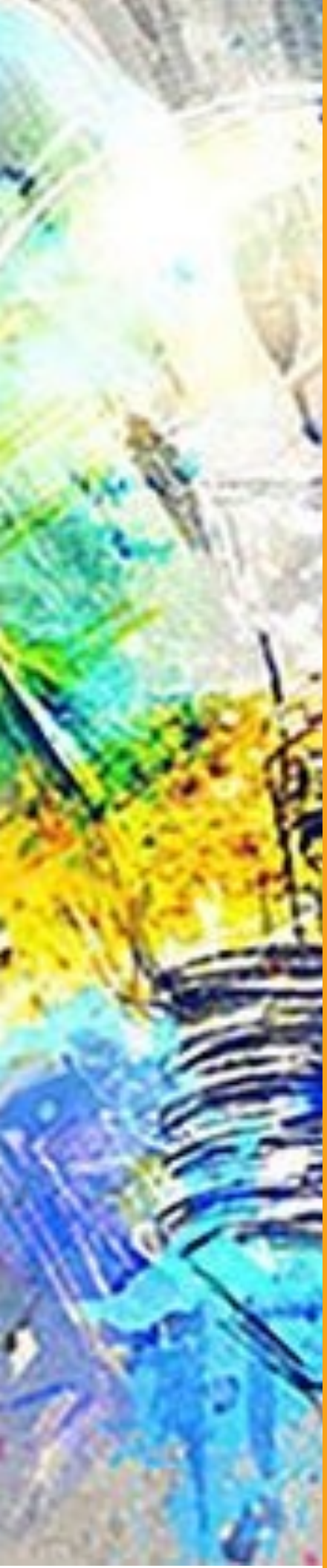
Creative Learning Initiative Annual Report 2016–2017

Department of
Research and Evaluation
AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



Executive Summary

The Creative Learning Initiative (CLI) is a community-wide effort to bring creative learning and the arts to each and every student in Austin. Lead by MINDPOP, the City of Austin, and the Austin Independent School District (AISD), CLI supports systemic and sustainable programs that integrate creativity, the arts, Creative Teaching strategies with classroom teaching, campus programming, and campus improvement. Since 2012, CLI has provided 56 campuses with the ongoing support to design and implement comprehensive campus plans to become more arts rich. At the campus level, the three pillars of the program are to (a) increase students' access to sequential fine arts instruction, (b) foster classroom learning with Creative Teaching across the curriculum, and (c) increase community arts programming during and out of the school day. Arts richness is defined across nine measures: sequential fine arts, Creative Teaching across the curriculum, professional development opportunities, arts partnerships, after-school activities, community building through the arts, communication, leadership, and facilities. During the first years of program implementation, foundational campuses receive a robust set of support interventions (e.g., professional development opportunities, follow-up coaching, and supplemental arts instruction in drama), then graduate to a sustaining campus status that assumes more campus independence and less reliance on support services. In 2016–2017, the program continued to achieve milestones toward program implementation and produced measurable positive impacts:

Increased progress toward district-wide arts richness

- In 2016–2017, the 5th year of CLI implementation in AISD, two-thirds of AISD campuses met the standard of a Creative Campus, exceeding expectations on progress toward the goal of 100% Creative Campuses by 2023.
- AISD Title I schools were more than twice as likely be Creative Campuses when they were part of CLI than AISD Title I schools not yet part of CLI.

Increased student access to sequential fine arts instruction

- All elementary campuses have shown increased offerings in all art forms since CLI began. CLI sustaining elementary campuses continued to provide access to theater, drama, and digital arts, exceeding foundational campuses and many nonparticipating campuses, despite reduced support.
- Secondary students who completed more fine arts courses than fewer fine arts courses had better attendance.
- Middle school students who completed more fine arts courses than fewer fine arts courses had better academic achievement.

Increased student outcomes through Creative Teaching across the curriculum

- Elementary students had significantly better attendance, engagement, and social and emotional learning (SEL) skills when their teachers were more competent in Creative Teaching than when their teachers were less competent in Creative Teaching.

- Competency in Creative Teaching is related to two primary inputs: the amount of time teachers spent with their coach (an average of 3 hours builds competency) and the teacher's perception of the coach's overall quality.

Increased community arts programming during and out of the school day

- CLI is having a positive impact on the average number of hours of arts exposure per student at both elementary and secondary schools.
- In 2016–2017, the average number of school day arts partners increased for all school levels, and almost doubled at CLI secondary schools, but this was partially driven by the largest increases, which were seen at CLI non-Title I schools.
- CLI schools had better access to the distribution of arts partners at elementary grades, with room for growth in kindergarten through 2nd grade. In secondary schools, CLI had a positive but modest impact on creating during-school arts opportunities outside the fine arts departments.

The overall program goals were met through the 2016–2017 implementation. This summary highlights some of those achievements. However, our research also revealed a few systematic and programmatic challenges. For example, secondary schools received fewer resources than did elementary schools and continued to have more challenges implementing Creative Teaching and establishing arts partnerships outside the fine arts departments. The research indicated that middle school students benefitted from participation in fine arts class; it also revealed some systemic inequities in their access to those opportunities. The campus-level data suggest teachers did not receive the necessary contact hours of instructional coaching to reach Creative Teaching competency in elementary schools, suggesting that the program was spread too thin to guarantee the same achievement results it had in earlier years. Many recommendations in this report relate to the challenges resulting from static funding allocations to serve steadily increasing numbers of students, teachers, and schools.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Introduction

Creative Learning Initiative Program Description

The Creative Learning Imitative (CLI) is a city-wide collaboration between MINDPOP, the City of Austin, Austin Independent School District (AISD), and more than 100 arts and cultural organizations dedicated to equitable access to creative learning and the arts for every student in Austin. It is based on research that shows that arts programs in and out of school have a powerful impact on both student cognition and youth development (Ruppert, 2006). Statewide research also identified a positive relationship between arts participation and academic achievement, attendance, graduation, and enrollment in higher education. The same research revealed access to those arts courses was not equitably distributed across regions, across districts, or within schools, particularly in high-poverty areas (Texas Cultural Trust, 2015). Initiatives such as CLI in Austin seek to ameliorate these inequities. Using the model of collective impact[1] and fueled by national research, local leaders from across private and public sectors came together to address the disparities in access to the arts for young people within schools, across the district, and in neighborhoods throughout our city.

In 2011, MINDPOP partnered with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to help community leaders conduct an inventory of arts access, assess needs, develop common goals, design a strategic action plan, and commit to the shared measurement of our impact and continuous communication. The current CLI model is comprehensive, providing support at the classroom level, the district level, and the community level to (a) create arts-rich schools; (b) create a community network to support and sustain the arts-rich life of every child; (c) develop leaders and systems to support and sustain quality creative learning for the development of the whole child; and (d) demonstrate measurable impacts on students, families, schools, and our community.

Examples of the support provided through the systemic approach of the CLI model include:

- Asset mapping at the city level
- Professional development opportunities for community arts partners to increase pedagogical skills and align their programs with school needs
- Parental supports
- Policy recommendations at the board level
- Curriculum development support at the district level
- Campus planning support for principals
- Professional development opportunities for teachers including follow-up coaching
- Dance and theater for elementary students
- Professional development for Parks and Recreation instructional staff

[1] Collective Impact is an innovative approach to tackling complex societal issues, in which philanthropists, businesses, nonprofits, and governmental organizations establish common goals and align diverse efforts toward long-term change (Kania & Kramer, 2011).

The robust program model represents best practices in instructional theory, systems change, and arts education. It operates on a staged implementation schedule that adds one vertical team each year through a competitive process that prioritizes campus readiness and need. Campuses in a vertical team work collectively for 3 foundational years, during which they receive instructional support for every teacher and school leader. Each foundational year, teachers focus on integrating Creative Teaching strategies from a new art form into their teaching practices, while principals and teacher -leaders build capacity toward sustainability. Campuses that are not yet rolled into the program are called non-CLI schools but have access to some of the same district-wide supports and some open professional development opportunities (Table 1). At each campus, regardless of CLI status, the initiative works to ensure equitable access to fine arts learning, Creative Teaching across the curriculum, and community arts organizations and resources. In combination, these three pillars align efforts in schools and across the community to provide an arts-rich experience for every student in Austin (see Appendix A for student demographics).

This report is organized into four main sections, with each section answering one research question. The first chapter after the introduction details the analysis of campus -level outcomes according to the Creative Campus Rubric. The three other chapters provide a deeper dive into the implementation of the three program components: sequential fine arts, Creative Teaching in the classroom, and the community arts partnership network. These chapters can stand alone if the reader's interest is focused in nature. The report concludes with a short summary of programmatic actions that have been taken to date, based on the findings included here.

Purpose of the Evaluation

This report presents findings on the impact of CLI on AISD as a whole district, its campuses, teachers, and students during the 2016–2017 school year.

The evaluation measured the level of program implementation at the district and campus levels, and explored the relationships between program implementation, equitable access to the arts, teacher practices and beliefs, and desired student outcomes (e.g., engagement, attendance, social and emotional skills, and academic achievement) (see Appendix B for a full list of instruments and methods of data collected).

To better understand the impact of current implementation on the district, we examined the impact of CLI implementation in these four areas:

1. **How much progress has AISD made toward making all schools Creative Campuses?**
2. **How is sequential fine arts instruction distributed throughout the district, and how did it affect students?**
3. **How did Creative Teaching affect teacher and student outcomes?**
4. **How did AISD schools engage with community arts partners?**

Table 1.
Table Snapshot of CLI implementation in AISD in 2016–2017.

CLI Status Foundational: status during 3 years of intense support Sustaining: automatic status after foundational years	Foundational	Sustaining	Non-CLI
# of campuses	32	24	63
# of vertical teams	3	2	7
# of students	16,187	15,080	51,240
# of teachers	1336	1159	3733
Creative campus leadership			
Campus leadership completes annual arts inventory	✓	✓	✓
Receive annual Creative Campus profile	✓	✓	✓
Support for teacher leaders		✓	
Arts richness goal required in campus improvement plan	✓	✓	
Direct principal support	✓	✓	
Ad hoc support			
Creative teaching across the curriculum			
Instructional coaches provided	4.5 coaches	.5 coach	0
Creative teaching workshops mandatory	✓		
Additional Creative Teaching workshops offered	✓	✓	✓
Arts partnerships			
Assistance with arts partner coordination	✓	✓	✓
$ for arts partnership ($4–$8 per student)	✓	✓	
Sequential fine arts			
Arts specialists provided for 2nd-grade dance and theater	4 specialists	2 specialists	0
CLI advocates for pro sequential fine arts policies	✓	✓	✓

Note. Only non-alternative campuses were included in analysis, though some were served by CLI.

Creative Campus Distribution in 2016–2017

Program Description and Goals

The visionary objective of CLI is to ensure all AISD schools are Creative Campuses by 2023. The term *Creative Campus* is a multifaceted way to summarize a framework of nine components that can come together in a myriad of ways to ensure an entire school community benefits from the arts. The nine components are (Figure 1):

1. Access to sequential fine arts in multiple art forms (music, dance, visual arts, theater, and digital media)
2. Professional development opportunities in Creative Teaching
3. Creative teaching across the curriculum
4. Community partnerships to enrich students' arts experiences during the school day
5. Community-building arts events hosted by campuses
6. Access to arts learning after school
7. School communication to share the school's value of arts richness with community
8. Campus leadership, including a strategic approach to increasing arts richness
9. Facilities to accommodate arts programming

Figure 1.
Nine Components of a Creative Campus

Source. MINDPOP
Note. See Appendices D and E for full rubric

We used the annual campus arts inventory and student data to assess these nine components and score arts richness on the Creative Campus Rubric. Each year, campuses are rated on the rubric as arts uninvolved, arts emerging-1, arts emerging-2, arts involved, or arts rich. Campuses that achieve at least the arts-involved standard are considered to have met the program's goal, while those that achieve the arts-rich standard are considered to excel in this area. Both arts-involved and arts-rich campuses are identified as Creative Campuses. Details of the primary components can be found in the following chapters: Sequential Fine Arts, Creative Teaching, and Community Arts Network. This chapter addresses the composite achievement of each school's arts richness on this rubric. To evaluate and inform the progress toward the initiative's long-term goal, this chapter seeks to shed light on the question "How much progress has AISD made toward making all schools Creative Campuses?"

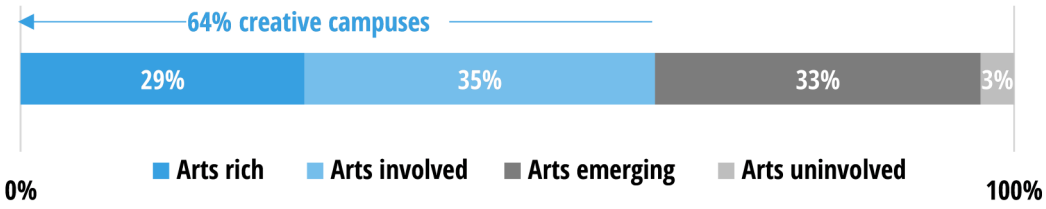
How much progress has AISD made toward making all schools Creative Campuses?

Key Findings and Interpretation

Creative Campus Distribution Finding 1: In 2016–2017, nearly two-thirds of AISD campuses met the creative-campus standard, exceeding expectations on progress toward the goal of 100% Creative Campuses by 2023.

Findings from 2016–2017 indicated that 64% of AISD schools met or exceeded the many criteria to attain the classification of Creative Campus (Figure 2). Though ratings on individual items on the rubric have been modified slightly based on new understanding (i.e., some less stringent and others more stringent), the overall score can still be used to track ongoing progress toward the goal that AISD have 100% Creative Campuses in 2023. Given the 10-year rollout plan of CLI, the 64% rate far exceeds the 50% benchmark set for the program in its 5th year of implementation.

Figure 2.
In 2016–2017, nearly two-thirds of AISD schools were Creative Campuses.



Source. 2016–2017 AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Inventory
Note. All required campuses (n = 119) submitted their data and were included for analysis.

CLI Implementation History in AISD

The 2016–2017 school year was the fifth year of CLI implementation in AISD. The program uses a staged implementation model that adds one AISD vertical team each year.

Campuses in a vertical team work collectively for 3 foundational years, during which they receive instructional support for every teacher and school leader. After the 3 foundational years, campuses transition to sustaining CLI status and receive limited support for campus leadership development, coaching, and arts partnerships.

The numbers of vertical teams, teachers, and students served in each year of AISD CLI implementation are summarized below.

2012–2013:
- 1 Vertical team
- ~574 Teachers
- ~7,516 Students

2013–2014:
- 2 Vertical teams
- ~1,163 Teachers
- ~15,146 Students

2014–2015:
- 3 Vertical teams
- ~1,755 Teachers
- ~22,106 Students

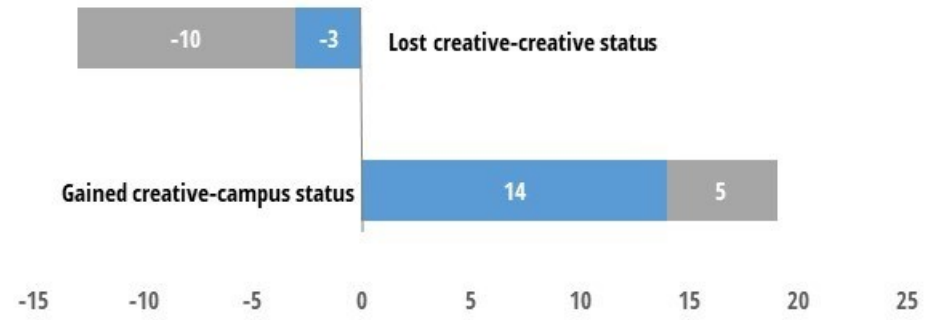
2015–2016:
- 4 Vertical teams
- ~2,049 Teachers
- ~25,529 Students

2016–2017:
- 5 Vertical teams
- ~2,495 Teachers
- ~31,267 Students

Creative Campus Distribution Finding 2: CLI support was critical to the increase in arts richness from 2015–2016 to 2016–2017.

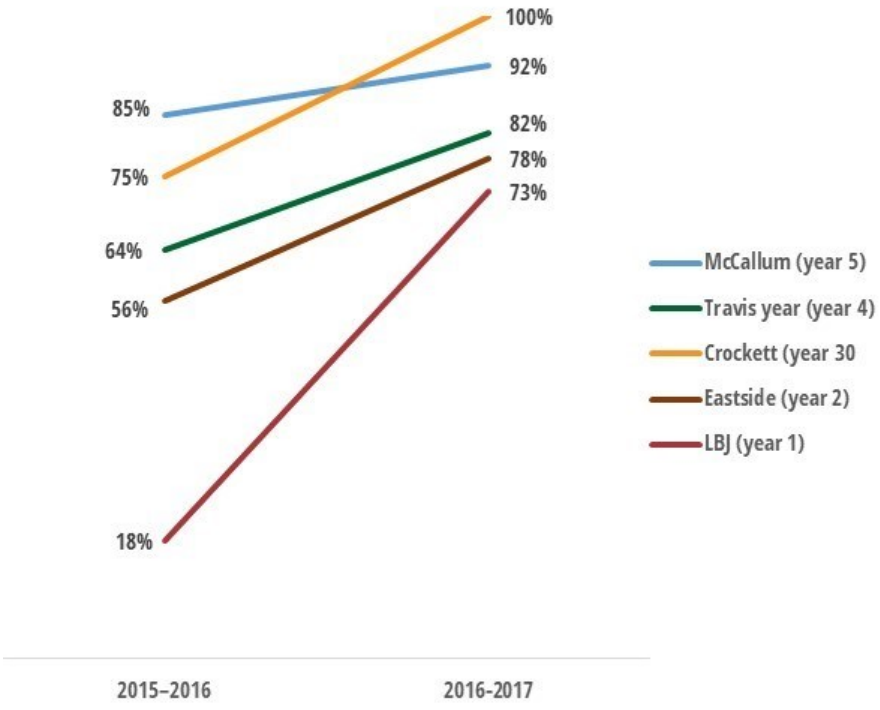
Data suggest that having CLI support at campuses greatly influenced the level of arts richness at these campuses (Figure 3). In 2016–2017, 19 schools met the creative-campus standards of arts involved or arts rich for the first time. Of those schools, only five were not in the CLI Program at all. On the other end of the spectrum, 13 campuses that had been Creative Campuses in 2015–2016 lost their status as a Creative Campus; only three of those were CLI schools (one 1st-year elementary school and two sustaining elementary schools).

Figure 3.
From 2015–2016 to 2016–2017, more CLI schools than non-CLI schools gained creative-campus status for the first time, fewer CLI schools than non-CLI schools lost their previously attained creative-campus status.



Source. 2016–2017 AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Inventory

Figure 4.
In 2016–2017, all CLI vertical teams, including McCallum (13 schools), Travis (11 schools), Crockett (12 schools), Eastside (nine schools), and LBJ (11 schools), increased their percentage of Creative Campuses.

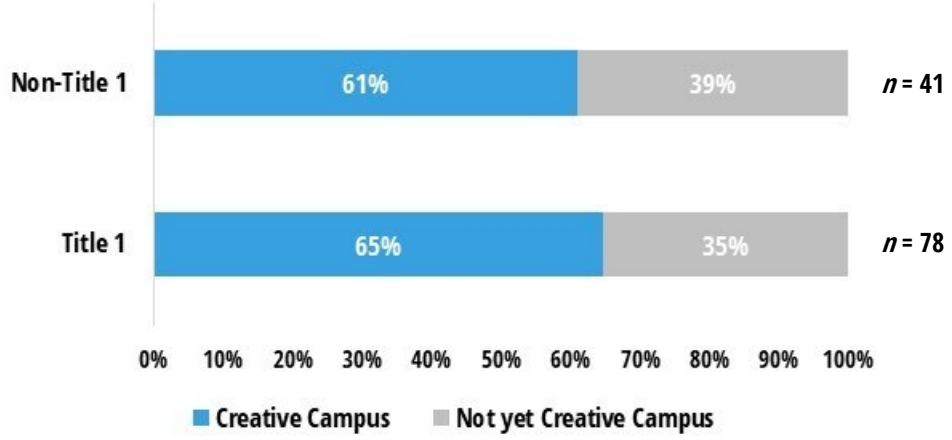


Source. 2016–2017 AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Inventory

Creative Campus Distribution Finding 3: Arts richness was achieved equitably across AISD Title I and Non-Title I schools; Title I schools were twice as likely to be Creative Campuses when they were a part of CLI than when not part of CLI.

The data from this school year were pivotal because it was the first year that 100% of schools submitted their campus-level arts-richness data. Now, with full data, we can confidently report that 65% of AISD's Title 1 schools and 61% of AISD's non-Title 1 schools were Creative Campuses (Figure 5).

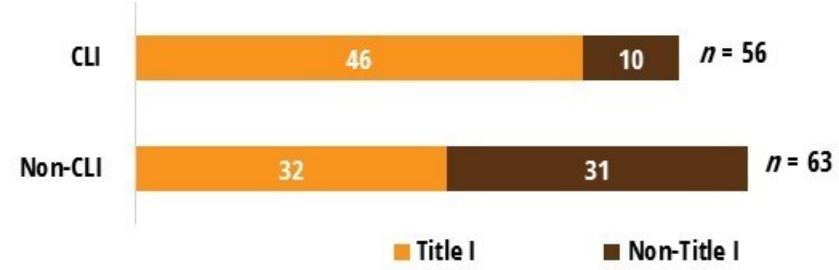
Figure 5.
In 2016–2017, the distribution of Creative Campuses was approximately even between CLI schools and non-CLI schools.



Source. 2016–2017 AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Inventory

Equitable achievement of arts richness is important because research shows that access to the arts is especially advantageous to low-income students, and yet it is often those populations who lack equitable access to the arts (see summary on page 9). In addition, we know that 66% of AISD's campuses are Title I, meaning 65% of their students qualify for free or reduced lunch. CLI is designed to close the arts-richness gap in AISD schools by weighting its application process to privilege schools with historic disadvantages. In fact, in 2016–2017, the majority of CLI campuses (82%) were Title I schools; whereas only 51% of non-CLI campuses were Title I (Figure 6).

Figure 6.
CLI serves a disproportional number of Title I campuses.

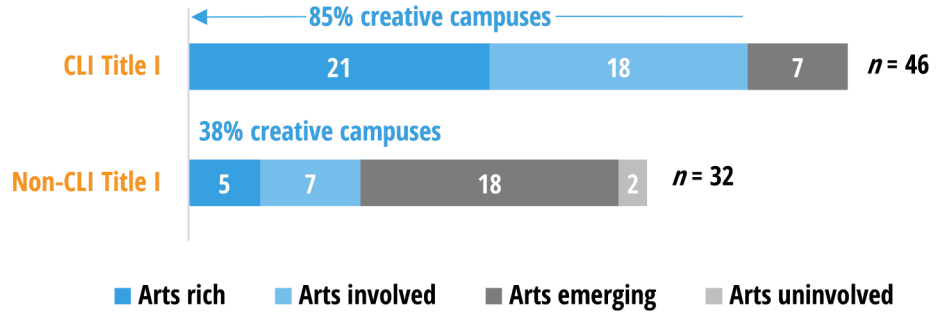


Source. 2016–2017 AISD campus records

With this support, in the last 2 years, a slightly higher percentage of Title 1 schools than of non-Title 1 schools were Creative Campuses. Despite historic disadvantages, CLI Title I schools were more than twice as likely to be Creative Campuses than Title 1 campuses not yet in CLI (Figure 7). As CLI expands to include more campuses, the data suggest there will be a continued increase in the proportion of Creative Campuses, resulting in increased arts access for all students, regardless of economic circumstance (see Appendices F and G for Creative Campus ratings and changes at individual schools).

CLI Title I schools were more than twice as likely to be Creative Campuses than Title 1 campuses not yet in CLI.

Figure 7.
Title I schools were twice as likely as to be Creative Campuses when they were part of CLI.



Source. 2016–2017 AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Inventory

Creative Campus Distribution Finding 4: A greater proportion of elementary schools than of secondary schools met the Creative Campus criteria.

In 2016–2017, AISD campuses were much more likely to meet the Creative Campus criteria at every school level when they participated in CLI, but this was most fully achieved at the elementary school level (Figure 8). As a comparison, 90% of CLI elementary schools were Creative Campuses, while only 67% of CLI high schools and 78% of CLI middle schools were Creative Campuses.

CLI Addressing the Equity Issue in AISD

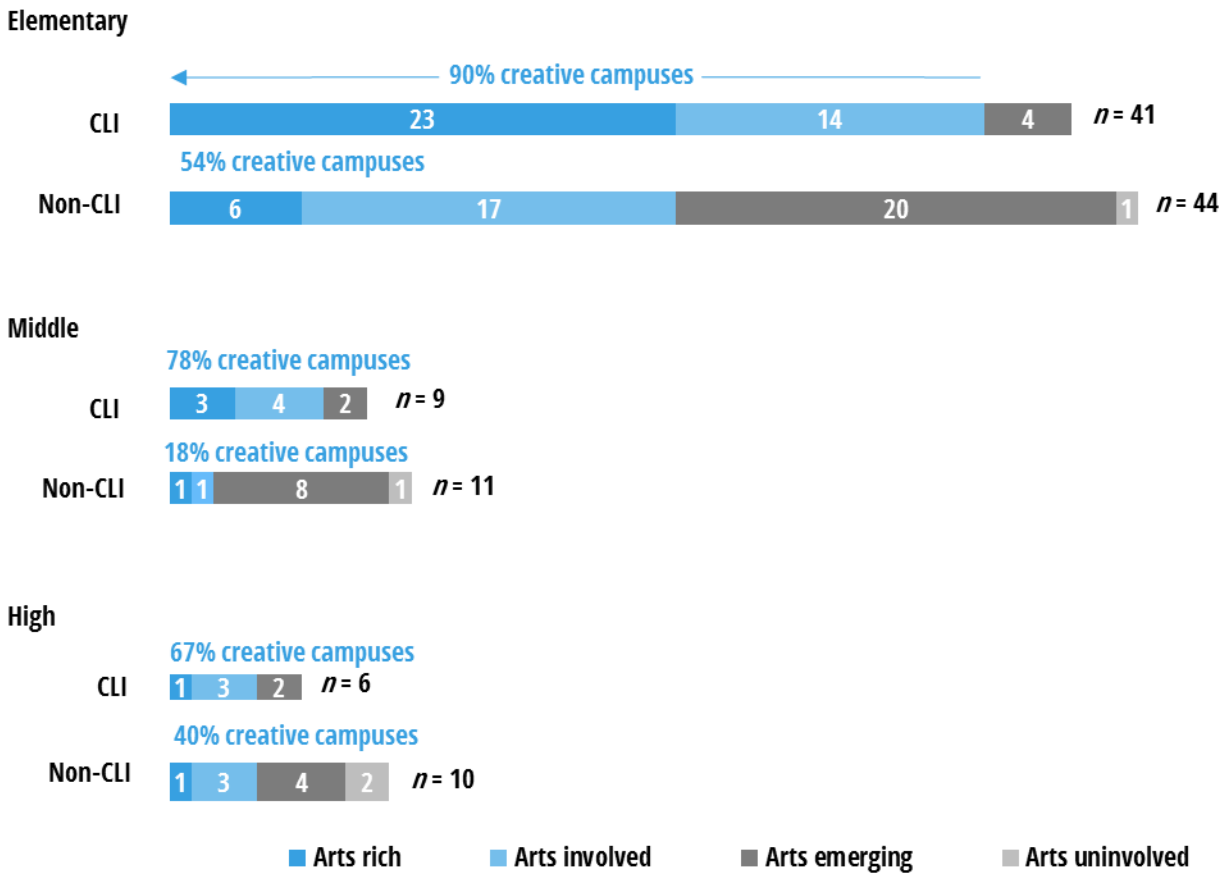
Research has shown that disadvantaged students who are engaged in the arts benefit both academically and nonacademically. For example:

- **Arts-engaged low-income students were four times more likely than low-income students not involved in the arts to have high academic achievement (Heath, Soep, & Roach, 1998).**
- **AIMS Arts integration schools reduced the reading gap by 14 percentage points and the math gap by 26 percentage points over a 3-year period (RealVisions, 2007).**
- **Low SES secondary students attending an arts-rich school were twice as likely as those attending an arts-poor school to attend college (Catterall, 2009).**

In reaction to this research, a committee of Austin stakeholders conducted a study of the arts landscape in AISD in 2011–2012. That analysis supported this body of research. They found that among AISD students in high-poverty schools, those who were engaged in the arts had better state test passing rates (8 to 29 percentage points) in every subject, higher rates of attendance (up to 5.2 percentage points), and better graduation rates (20 percentage points) than did similar students not engaged in the arts. Unfortunately, that initial inventory of arts offerings also revealed that AISD students' access to the arts was inconsistent across the district. In too many cases, those who could most benefit from arts participation had less access to arts instruction and had fewer art forms and community arts partnerships at their schools.

Upon discovering AISD's disparities in access to the arts, knowing the benefits of arts-rich education for disadvantaged students, CLI was designed to create arts-rich schools FOR ALL STUDENTS. Although the initiative is not exclusively for Title I schools, CLI does aim to close the gap of arts access that has historically been present in AISD, by weighting program applications for selection in favor of historically underserved schools with a high percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch.

Figure 8.
The proportion of CLI campuses that were Creative Campuses was greater than the proportion of non-CLI campuses that were Creative Campuses, at all school levels. The proportion was the highest at elementary CLI campuses.



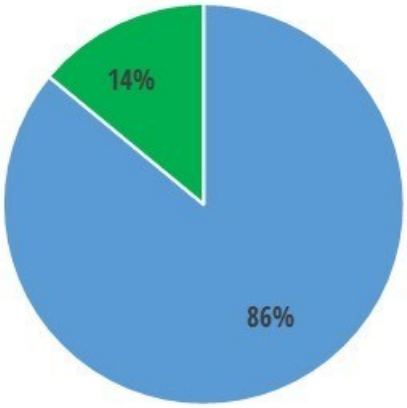
Source. 2016–2017 AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Inventory
Note. Ann Richards and Rosedale are included in both the middle and high school levels because they provided the same inventory data for these two levels

When we look at how secondary schools performed on the individual components of the Creative Campus Rubric, it is clear that certain areas of implementation were more challenging than others. Secondary schools struggled specifically on the components of the rubric for frequency of Creative Teaching in the classroom, fostering student participation in the arts that exceeds state requirements, and setting up a wide distribution of arts partnerships. Because the nature of school organization is different at elementary and secondary schools, these comparisons are not "apples to apples," but rather different by design. Bearing in mind the different designs of art richness at different school levels, our interpretation of these differences is not that secondary schools are lacking effort or intentions toward arts richness, but that the challenges they face are more difficult to achieve.

These outcomes are also not surprising, considering that the majority of CLI resources have historically been directed toward elementary schools. Even as the program began, the Kennedy Center made the recommendation to restrict implementation to kindergarten through 8th grade because of the increased challenges of implementing in high schools. However, at that time, the high school principals in AISD lobbied for their inclusion in the rollout. Leadership decided to include secondary schools, but not as the

primary focus of implementation. All school levels would receive financial support for arts partnerships, as well as group professional development opportunities, but the majority of additional resources would be directed toward elementary campuses in the form instructional coaches and arts specialists to deliver elementary drama and dance. In 2016–2017, program staff reallocated more resources toward secondary schools to better support the challenges of secondary implementation. However, even after that reallocation, 86% of the direct support to campuses went to elementary schools (Figure 9). In 2016–2017, approximately $624,000 was used to directly support elementary campuses ($33.52 per student) and $100,000 was used to directly support secondary campuses ($7.98 per student). This difference is largely because the ratio of Creative Teaching coaches to students was much lower at the elementary level (184:1 in elementary and 409:1 in secondary), and elementary schools have dedicated arts specialists in dance and theater.

Figure 9.
The proportion of direct campus support, in the form of coaches, arts specialists, and funding for arts partnerships, that went to elementary schools was 6 times what was dedicated to secondary schools.



Source. 2016–2017 CLI budget

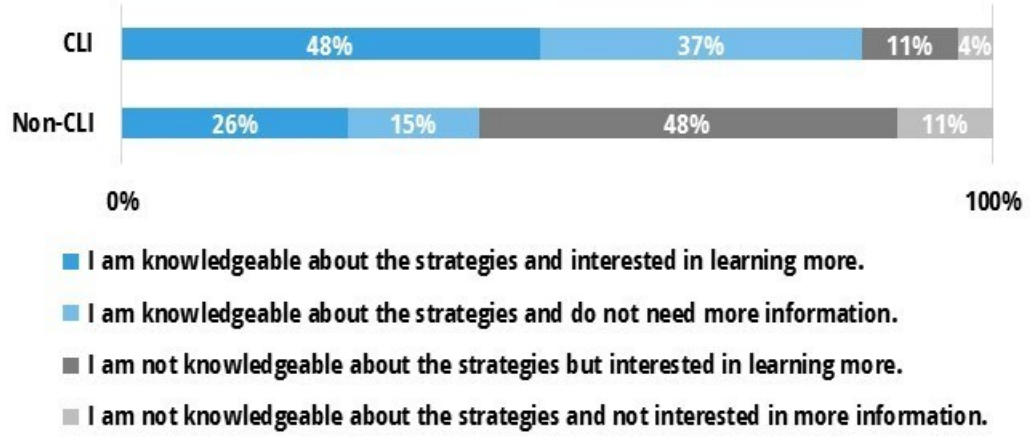
Creative Campus Distribution Finding 5: Schools increasingly met CLI objectives, even when they were not in the CLI Program.

In 2016–2017, CLI reached the halfway point of its 10-year rollout plan. By adding one vertical team per year, it officially served slightly less than half of the district: 47% of the district's campuses and five of 12 vertical teams. Since first measuring arts richness at the campus level in 2014–2015, the district has gone from 37% of campuses to 64%. The findings presented here demonstrate many positive results for CLI schools, particularly for Title I schools. Interestingly, several findings from 2016–2017 also suggest that the positive outcomes of CLI are showing up outside the scope of direct CLI support. The positive spillover effect of these results suggests that CLI's scale and scope of influence have started to evoke systems change at the district level.

For example, in 2016–2017, we surveyed 2971 teachers at non-CLI schools across the district, and 41% responded that they already felt knowledgeable about the Creative Teaching strategies (Figure 10). In 2014–2015, at the end of 3 years of implementation,

we had asked the same question. Of the 764 non-CLI respondents from that year, only 15% responded that they already felt knowledgeable about the strategies. This increase of 26 percentage points over 2 years could be explained by many factors, including information filtering down from district leadership through principals and campus leaders; non-CLI teachers' attendance at professional development opportunities in the community; and the adoption of CLI strategies by other district departments, from lessons inserted into district course road maps and/or exemplars provided in teacher quality documents. This change might also be explained because some teachers transferred from schools that had already received CLI support and served as informal ambassadors for the strategies. That teachers might transfer between schools is not shocking, but the extent to which CLI knowledge showed up where it had not been officially disseminated is surprising and a positive indicator of systems change.

Figure 10.
Most CLI respondents felt knowledgeable about Creative Teaching strategies, and 74% of non-CLI respondents were interested in learning more.



Source. 2016–2017 AISD Employee Coordinated Survey
Note. CLI *n* = 1,148, non-CLI *n* = 1,759.

At this halfway marker, data also suggest district-wide excitement about Creative Teaching in the classroom. In 2014–2015, only 49% of non-CLI teachers reported being interested in learning more about the Creative Teaching strategies, regardless of their knowledge level (Wang, Christian & Hasty, 2015). By 2016–2017, 74% of non-CLI teachers reported being interested in learning more. They might have heard that other teachers believed that Creative Teaching strategies work in the classroom. Implementation survey results showed that CLI teachers had very high regard for the Creative Teaching strategies and believed they had a positive impact on student behavior (89%), student achievement (90%), and student engagement in learning (96%).[2]

[2] 2016–2017 Creative Learning Initiative November Workshop and Follow-Up Implementation Survey, n = 615.

It could also be that non-CLI teachers heard their colleagues discussing the quality of the professional development workshops. Surveys of workshop participants indicate the vast majority of respondents reported that the Creative Teaching workshops were engaging (98%) and inspiring (92%), and 77% of respondents reported that CLI workshops were better in quality than other district professional development opportunities.[3] In a climate where professional development opportunities are not always met with enthusiasm, we find it remarkable that so many teachers viewed it so positively and that the majority of non-CLI teachers wanted to learn more about Creative Teaching strategies.

In addition to the component of Creative Teaching, this years' data also showed spillover increases in many other Creative Campus Rubric components at non-CLI campuses. For example, the number of arts partners per school increased at non-CLI campuses, the number of arts community engagement events increased at non-CLI campus, and the number of non-CLI schools including arts richness in their campus improvement plans increased. Even parents' responses followed this trend in the district -wide parent survey. In 2015–2016, when parents were asked whether their child's school provided them with adequate opportunities to study the arts and experience creative learning, 94% of parents agreed or strongly agreed with that statement (Wang, Christian & Hasty, 2016). In 2017–2018, the district-wide response increased to 95%. However, if we isolate our inquiry to only the responses from-non-CLI schools for each year, the increase went from 93% to 95% during those same years.

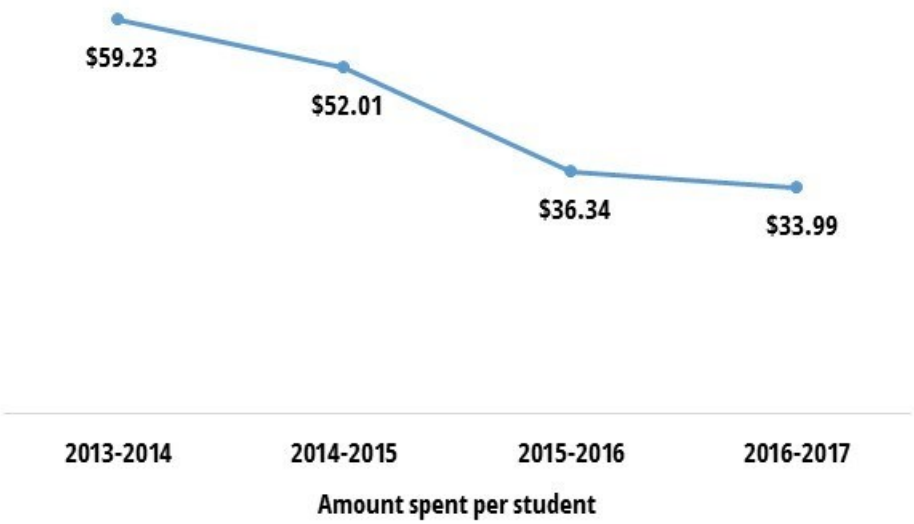
It is too early to know exactly which actions contributed to the positive spillover effect we found in much of this year's data. While we hope for something as big as a general shift in culture that values the arts more, there are probably multiple contributions, including but not limited to the publication of creative-campus profiles from the 2015–2016 school year. These campus-level profiles document each school's progress toward arts-richness. They articulate a road map for becoming arts rich, which non-CLI schools might be following, even without the formal supports that a CLI campus receives to develop campus action plans. CLI leadership's advocacy work behind the scenes facilitated community arts partnerships, reducing barriers to students' access to sequential fine arts, and encouraged excitement about Creative Teaching in the classroom. Perhaps that systems-level advocacy work is starting to show up in the data.

Creative Campus Distribution Finding 6: Financial support for CLI remained relatively unchanged despite the gradual addition of 23,781 students since the first full year of implementation.

Since its inclusion in the AISD budget in 2013–2014, CLI has increased the number of schools, students and teachers supported each year, while operating with a relatively static budget (Figure 11). In 2013–2014, the amount spent to serve 7,516 students was approximately $1.2M. Over the years, CLI has been funded by a combination of revenue streams, including the National Endowment for the Arts, Department of Education, MINDPOP, and AISD. While external grants supplemented the budget in some years, the current allocation continues to be $1.2M to serve 31,267 students.

[3] 2016 Creative Learning Initiative Fall Workshop Surveys, n = 636 .

Figure 11.
Since 2013–2014, the amount spent per CLI student has been reduced by almost half.



Source. 2016–2017 CLI budget and student records
Note. Though the program began in 2012–2013, financials for that year are not comparable due to the fact that AISD did not fund the program directly in 2012–2013. The program was funded by a combination of resources from MINDPOP, Austin Creative Classroom Fund, and arts partners.

The original budget was established 4 years before the first vertical team transitioned into the sustaining phase. Without knowing the degree of impact the foundational interventions would have on the campuses' capacity to maintain arts richness, the leadership opted to postpone the assignment of a sustaining budget until more data could be collected on the needs of sustaining campuses. As the program matured and vertical teams moved into the sustaining phase, it became clear that some modest supports were needed in sustaining schools to address teacher turnover and leverage campus-based teacher leaders for the initiative. However, additional funding to support sustaining schools was not available, so the leadership sought external funding to support sustaining campus leadership development, limited coaching, and arts partnerships. The district's static budget allocation was stretched to support foundational vertical team implementation, while continuing to provide dance and drama specialists in the elementary sustaining campuses, at their request. Similarly, secondary schools' request for additional coaching support required more resources than originally allocated. Without additional funds to cover those additional needs of secondary schools, program leaders again chose to stretch their implementation activities, allowing coaches to reach more teachers, but with less focused support.

The level of funding has been constant each year of CLI implementation, yet the numbers of schools, staff, and students served each year has more than quadrupled since the pilot year of implementation.

Over the years, CLI leadership endeavored to find effective ways to grow the program's impact without growing the budget. However, this year's evaluation results, while still positive in many areas, are beginning to show evidence of strain in other areas. In

previous years, our research found a positive relationship between campus-level arts richness and campus-level student outcomes (e.g., attendance and engagement). This year, however, student outcomes were not significant at the campus level, and our only significant findings were at the teacher level of implementation. The reasons for this change are unclear, but one interpretation is that while more campuses met the quantitative measures of the Arts-Richness Rubric, the quality of campus-level implementation was not as effective when resources were spread so thinly across so many schools, and that change was not captured by the rubric. Further work could be done to incorporate measurements of quality into the campus-level arts-richness scores to understand how those objectives might be influenced by different variables affecting AISD schools at the campus level.

Conclusion and Recommendations

How much progress did our district make towards having 100% Creative Campuses in 2016-2017? In terms of campus-level arts richness, two-thirds of campuses met the standard of a Creative Campus. Despite an increasingly tight budget, the CLI Program met and exceeded its 2016-2017 benchmark toward the goal of 100% arts rich campuses by 2023. The initiative achieved a major success by demonstrating an equitable distribution of arts richness between Title I and non-Title I campuses but continued to show more challenges to implementation in secondary schools than elementary schools. Finally, the initiative appeared to be approaching a critical tipping point as a districtwide initiative, as several Creative Campus components increased in schools that have not yet even been officially rolled in as CLI schools. This is a critical moment for implementation of CLI in AISD. In order to support attainment of the visionary objective that all AISD schools are arts rich by 2022–2023, we can use this analysis to support the following recommendations to program implementation:

Recommendation #1: Increase resources or modify methods of implementation to support the program as it increases the number of campuses. Implementation in 2016–2017 was characterized by increased pressure from the scale of the initiative now supporting nearly half the district's schools, with no increase in funding since it supported only one vertical team (13 schools). As CLI graduates more vertical teams into the sustaining stage, the population of campuses in need of ongoing support, even if at a limited level, will only increase. As the highest priority, we recommend program staff strategize a revised approach to support an increased number of schools that are rolled into the program each year. The only way to continue with the method of implementation as originally designed, in addition to support for secondary and sustaining schools, would be to increase the budget. Barring this option, we recommend program implementation be reduced in scale, in scope, or in changed methodology to assure program efficacy using existing resources.

Recommendation #2: Maintain CLI supports for Title I campuses to continue improving district-wide equity. The support provided to Title I campuses closed the arts-richness gap that historically existed between Title I and non-Title I schools in AISD. While this finding should be celebrated, there continue to be pockets of inequity between individual schools. For these reasons, we strongly recommend the continued support of Title I schools toward the goal of art richness.

Recommendation #3: Examine program implementation at the secondary level to understand drivers and inhibitors of change. Based on the continued challenges for secondary schools to meet the creative-campus standards, we recommend a systemic investigation into the challenges encountered as the secondary level. CLI leaders are beginning to do this work, in both foundational and sustaining secondary schools. We recommend they shadow the one coach working on the secondary foundational campuses and interview principals, arts specialists, bookkeepers, and instructional coaches from other departments to identify more effective inroads into implementation at secondary schools.

Recommendation #4: Increase the visibility of the creative-campus profiles. Arts richness is increasing across the district for many reasons, but at non-CLI schools, we suspect that the increases are partially due a combination of two factors: those schools tend to be high-resourced and to have increased visibility of creative-campus profiles that measure arts richness. We know that creative-campus profiles serve as a benchmark of quality to guide campus-level goal setting in CLI schools. We recommend promoting this tool to engage non-CLI schools in setting arts-rich goals for their communities, as well.

Sequential Fine Arts

Program Description and Goals

The fine arts (music, dance, theater, visual and media arts) play a significant role in a well-rounded education. The literacies and cultural heritage in these disciplines represent how people across cultures and generations express their understanding of the world around them, record and remember history, and make and keep community. The skills used in these classes can be used by professional artists and hobbyists, and also transfer to almost every field and industry that involves communicating with others. Many refer to these industry skills as 21st-century communication skills. According to a study conducted by the Texas Cultural Trust and its partners MINDPOP, E3 Alliance, and AISD in November, 2014, studying the arts also contributes to positive academic outcomes for Texas students. For example, at the high school level, in addition to having better performance on state assessments, students who were engaged in the arts early in high school had lower dropout rates, higher graduation rates, and greater rates of enrollment in higher education in Texas than did students who were not (Texas Cultural Trust, 2015).

Therefore, as one important component of the metric to be a Creative Campus, students should have access to high-quality instruction in a diversity of art forms on a regular basis. To that end, CLI leaders and the AISD's Fine Arts Department promote access to sustained learning for all kindergarten through grade-12 students in music, visual arts, dance, drama, and the media arts. In addition to providing participating schools with dance and drama instructors to fill in the gaps of elementary school fine arts offerings, they have advocated for AISD's fine arts academies, including Lamar and Covington Middle Schools, and Blackshear and Campbell Elementary Schools. At the district level, they have worked to bring consistency to the execution of existing arts education policies, exposed areas of inequitable access to arts education, advocated for future policies to enhance access to the arts, and consistently worked to raise awareness about the positive impacts of arts participation on student outcomes.

The state of Texas is one of 26 states that considers the fine arts a core subject area, meaning that all schools are required to make arts opportunities available to all students at all levels.

The goal of the sequential fine arts (SFA) pillar is to increase students' participation in the arts. Implementation in this pillar is expected to demonstrable outcomes over time, as the initiative influences systems change in district policy and student choices that support offering more courses in more art forms, with more students participating in arts courses before they graduate. Now in its 5th year of implementation, we are just beginning to see the effects of early work in this area. It will be 2 to 3 more years before we can do a complete longitudinal analysis to show if those additional arts opportunities made the long-term impact that was expected. This chapter reports on beginning

levels of access to the arts over time and includes an analysis of student outcomes related to arts participation, but the majority of the presentation is designed to answer this question: How is access to sequential fine arts currently distributed in AISD and how is that affecting students?

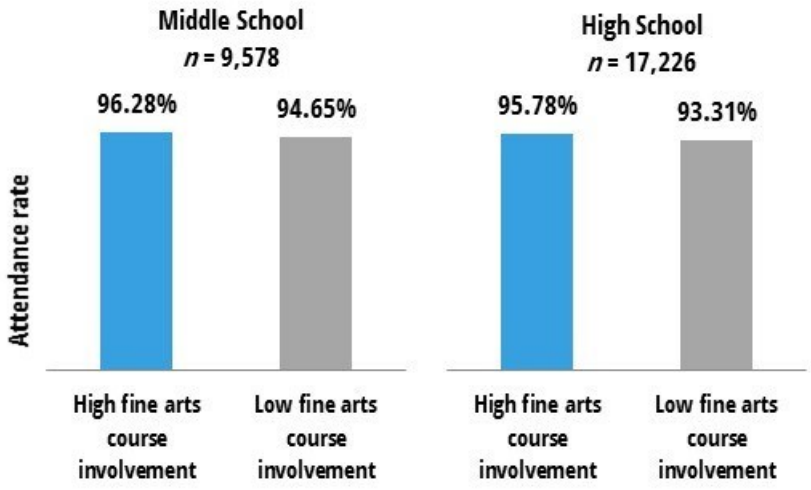
How is access to sequential fine arts currently distributed in AISD, and how is that affecting students?

Key Findings and Interpretation

Sequential Fine Arts Finding 1: Secondary students completing more fine arts courses had better attendance than their peers completing fewer fine arts courses.

The number of fine arts courses that students completed during their tenure at the campus was significantly related to students' attendance rates ($F=912.82$, $p < .05$), controlling for students' socioeconomic status (SES). This finding for high and low fine arts involvement applied to both middle and high school students when we compared the attendance of middle school students taking 2 or more year-long fine arts courses with students taking 1 or less year-long fine arts courses and the attendance of high school students taking 1 or more year-long fine arts courses with students taking no year-long fine arts courses (Figure 12). Based on this cohort finding, we looked at the attendance outcomes of students just during the 2016–2017 year. We broke the students into quartiles, based on their fine arts participation, and compared the high and low quartiles to their attendance. In this manner, we were better able to see what that statistical difference looks like in terms of attendance rate, days in school, and revenue based on average daily attendance.

Figure 12.
Attendance was greater for secondary students who were more involved in fine arts courses than for secondary students who were less involved in fine arts courses.



Source. AISD student class enrollment 2016–2017, AISD student attendance records 2016–2017

This amounted to a 1.6 percentage point difference in middle school attendance rates (or 2.8 additional days at school) and a 2.4 percentage point difference in high school attendance rates (or 4.4 additional days at school). Hypothetically speaking, if we could raise the attendance rate for high school students in the lowest quartile of arts

Elementary School SFA Measurement

In AISD, elementary level sequential fine arts instruction is offered to students in groups by their grade level. In the case of music and art, grade level classes travel together to attend music and art 'specials' for at least 45 minutes every three days with a certified arts specialist. Schools may use discretionary funding to add regular instruction in other art forms, such as dance, drama, or media arts. CLI provides its participating schools with specialists to teach weekly classes in dance and theater, one semester at a time, usually to 2nd-grade students.

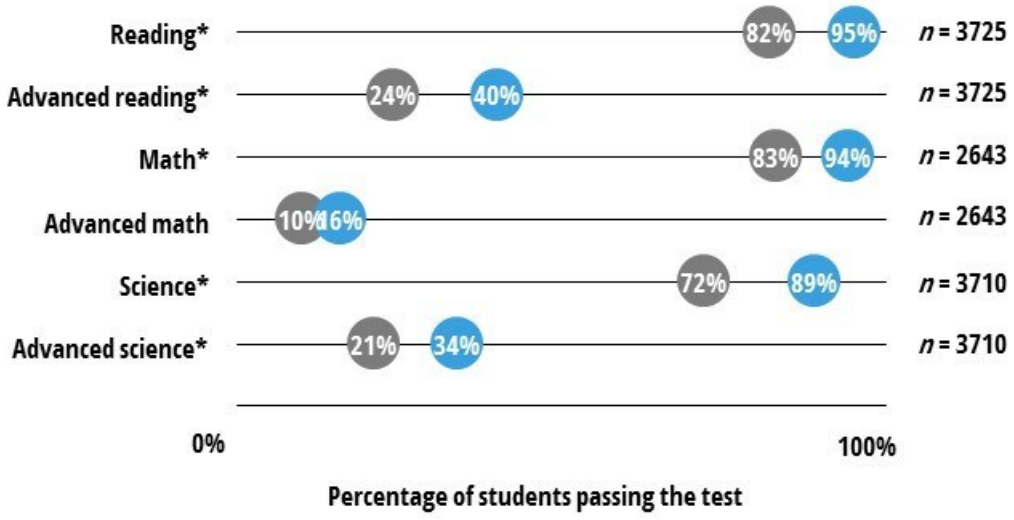
Because these arts opportunities are offered at the grade level, we cannot track individual student participation. At the end of each year we ask elementary school principals about their regular offerings in sequential fine arts in terms of the frequency, duration, and grade level for each art form. The principal has a lot of discretion around what constitutes "regularity" of instruction, and of course, the quality of the instruction offered. Our data cannot speak to those details of implementation. Also, this data is limited in that is does not capture individual students that might have been repeatedly pulled out of these class for other reasons. We know this is an issue with implementation but have no comprehensive way to assess it at this time.

participation to the attendance rate for high school students in the highest quartile of arts participation, data suggest the district would see an increase in ADA revenue of $1.3 million dollars. If attendance rates for all high school students were equivalent to attendance rates for high school students in the highest quartile of arts participation, we could expect an increase of $1.9 million dollars. An additional $700K could be expected from middle school students if attendance rates for all middle school students were equivalent to attendance rates for middle school students in the highest quartile of arts participation.

Sequential Fine Arts Finding 2: Middle school students who completed more fine arts courses had better academic achievement than those who completed fewer fine arts courses.

Analysis demonstrated that the number of fine arts courses middle students completed during their tenure at the campus significantly predicted their State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) passing status in reading, advanced reading, math, science, and advanced science, controlling students' SES ($p < .05$) (Figure 13). No significant relationship was found for middle school students' passing status in advanced math. In addition, no relationships were found between sequential fine arts participation and academic achievement for high school students or elementary students, despite previous research indicating that positive relationship.

Figure 13.
Middle school students who were highly engaged in the arts had better academic outcomes than did students who were less engaged in the arts in reading, advanced reading, math, science, and advanced science.



Source. AISD student class enrollment record 2014–2015, 2015–2016, 2016–2017, AISD student STAAR records 2016–2017

Middle School SFA Measurement

At the middle school level, students have individual agency in setting up their schedule to include various electives. Therefore, we track students by their academic records of courses completed. Students are expected to complete two semesters of fine arts courses.

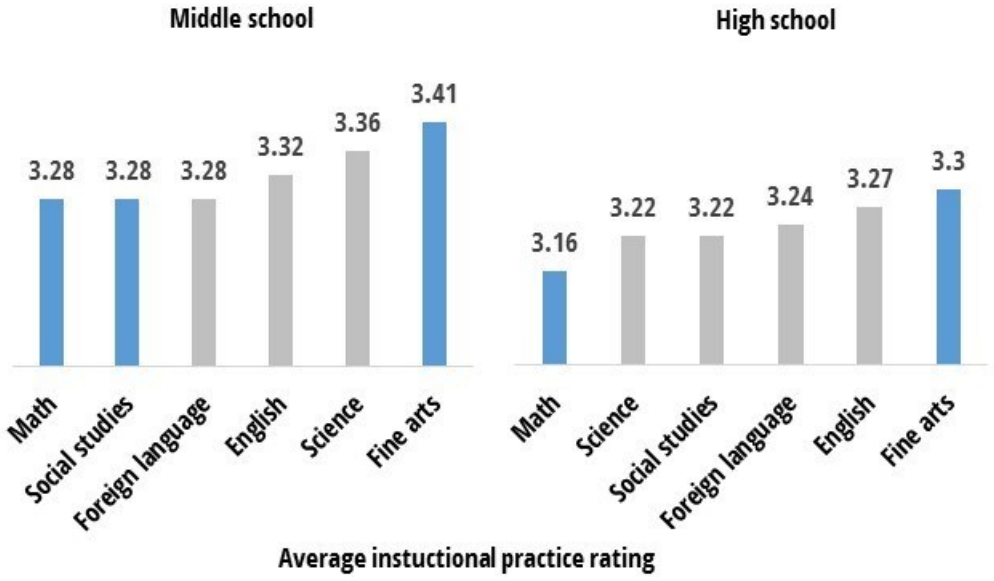
Texas requires that middle school students take one fine arts course; which AISD teaches over one school year. AISD scheduling policy is that each middle school student should take 1 year of a fine arts course between 6th and 8th grade, but the school staff have a great deal of discretion in what counts as a fine arts course and when exceptions to the policy can be made.

To understand access to sequential fine arts in middle schools, we counted the number of fine arts courses completed by cohorts of non-mobile students who stayed at the same school for all of middle school. While this underestimates the amount of sequential fine arts learning at any one campus, it allows us to compare schools with more consistency. Our counts of courses are restricted to the official code for fine arts courses.

Sequential Fine Arts Finding 3: Instructional quality was better in fine arts courses than in other subjects in secondary schools, particularly in middle schools.

As part of the teacher evaluation system, each teacher is observed twice a year to assess the quality of his or her instructional practice. Though not a comprehensive measure of teaching quality, data from these observations did suggest that instruction tended to be of better quality in fine arts subjects than in many other secondary school subjects. In particular, the instructional practice in middle school was significantly better in fine arts than in math and social studies. In high school, fine arts instruction was significantly better than was instruction in math. In elementary school, no significant differences were found. These findings require more investigation. In subjects such as math and science, standard exams and benchmark tests can be used to begin to objectively assess the quality of learning in those content areas. However, in the fine arts there are no common exams, rubrics, or standards to which all instructors submit their evidence of learning. As a result, our understanding of teaching quality in the fine arts is currently restricted to the observation of instructional practice. Also, the observational instrument designed to assess overall instructional practice was in its first year of full implementation, as the reliability of the instrument is still being researched under full implementation.

Figure 14.
Instructional quality was rated better in fine arts than instructional quality in math and social studies in middle school (n = 2,236) and was rated better in fine arts than in math in high school (n = 5,090).



Source. AISD teacher records
Note. This graph highlights the top of the range from 3 to 3.5. Scores on the instructional practice rubric range from 1-4 on seven items relevant to general instructional practice. The omnibus F for all three models were significant, $p < .0001$. Post hoc comparisons between major subjects in middle and high school and between grade level in elementary were run. To highlight the differences with fine arts instruction, only those comparisons where there was a significant difference at $p \leq .05$ with fine arts are indicated in blue.

High School SFA Measurement

At the high school level, students have individual agency in setting up their schedule to include various electives. Therefore, we track students by their academic records of courses completed. Students are expected to complete two semesters of fine arts courses.

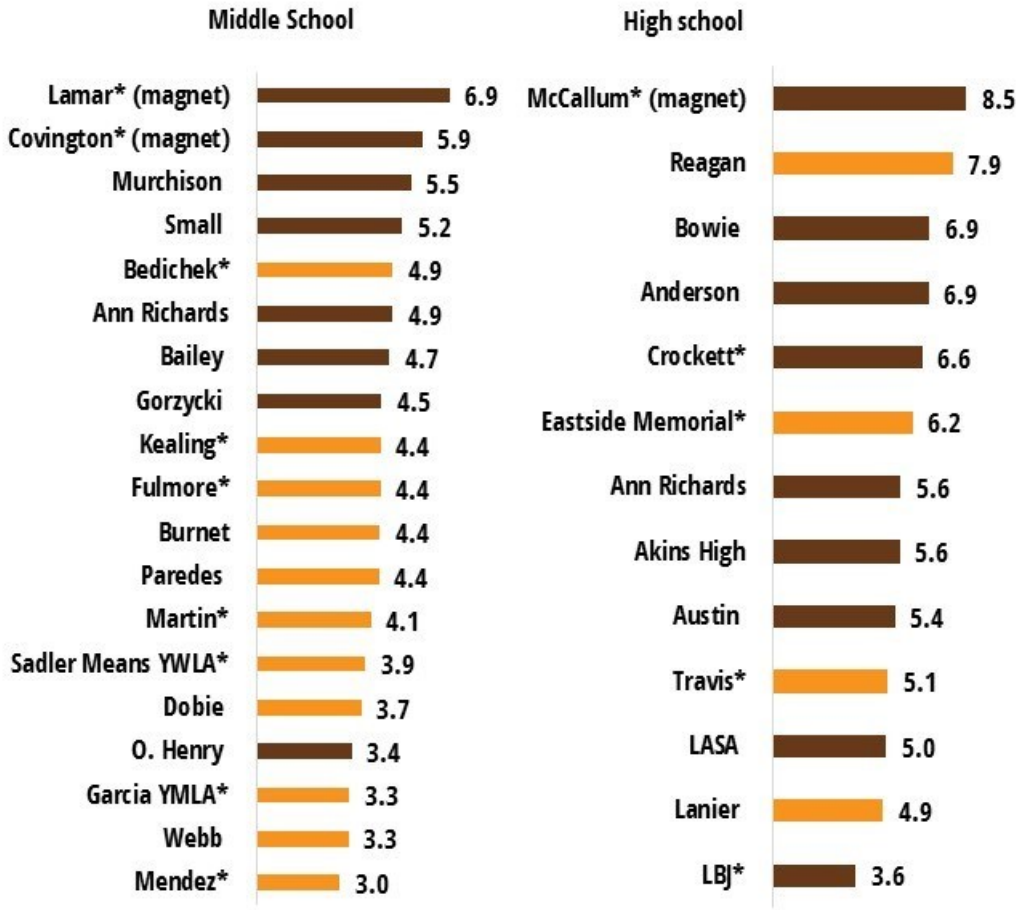
At the high school level, this 1-year requirement is tied to the graduation plan of every student by Texas law. A few isolated classes in floral design and interior design can meet the fine arts high school requirement per state law, but the majority of fine arts courses are offered in music, visual arts, dance, and theater. There are many classes in film, photography, animation, graphic design, creative writing, and other fields that do not officially carry the fine arts coding, as set by the state of Texas, but overlap with the goals of arts-rich education. Our counts of courses are restricted to the official code for fine arts courses.

To understand access to sequential fine arts in high schools, we counted the number of fine arts courses completed by cohorts of non-mobile students who stayed at the same school for all of high school. While this underestimates the amount of sequential fine arts learning at any one campus, it allows us to compare schools with more consistency.

Sequential Fine Arts Finding 4: Systemic inequities were present in access to sequential fine arts across the district, with some outstanding outliers.

Findings summarizing the courses taken by non-mobile cohorts of students at different high schools suggest systemic differences in access to sequential fine arts across the district. For example, the average student at Reagan High School completed 7.9 semesters of fine arts courses, while the average student at LBJ High School only completed 3.6 semesters, despite both schools serving students with similar demographic profiles. Bearing in mind that the graduation requirement is to have completed two semester-long courses, it is encouraging to see most students exceeding expectations; however, it is discouraging to see such differences between schools. It makes sense that McCallum High School might have a significantly different average number of fine arts courses per student (8.5) because it is the district's fine arts academy; however, we would theoretically expect non-arts magnets to have similar averages of arts courses taken. Though we know the middle school course data to be a little messier, due to some campus variations in course coding, Figure 15 suggests a disparity between Title I and non-Title I middle school students in terms of access to the sequential fine arts. Further investigation will be needed to understand both the data itself and the factors that are leading to these potentially systemic differences (Figure 15).

Figure 15.
Students at Title I middle schools demonstrated lower average levels of fine arts participation than did students at non-Title I middle schools.

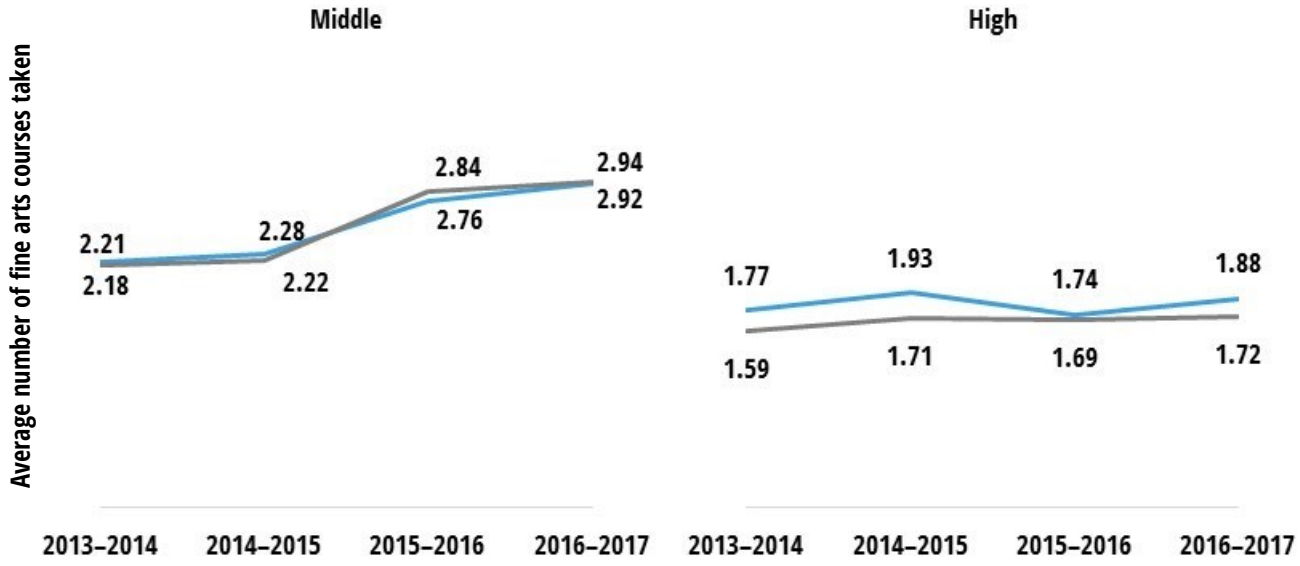


Source. AISD student class enrollment record 2013–2014, 2014–2015, 2015–2016, 2016–2017
Note. CLI schools are indicated with an asterisk.

When we look at the sequential fine arts participation for each CLI status, we find that non-mobile students (those enrolled at the same school from 2014–2015 through 2016–2017) at CLI middle school campuses completed significantly more fine arts classes over their tenure than did students at non-CLI campuses. At CLI campuses, students completed an average of 4.8 semesters of fine arts courses, but students at non-CLI campuses completed an average of only 4.6 ($p > 0.05$). At the high school level, the spread between CLI and non-CLI campuses was larger. Students enrolled in one high school from 2012–2013 through 2016–2017 at CLI campuses competed 6.4 fine arts classes, and non-CLI students took 6.1 semesters of fine arts. This difference, however, was not statistically significant, probably due to the smaller size of the high school non-mobile cohort and greater variance in fine arts participation.

Another way of examining students' fine arts participation is to look at the number of courses taken per year (Figure 16). Unlike the cohort analysis, which averages each student's arts trajectory over time, this analysis asks how many arts classes were completed by students each year. This perspective can be used to study change over time in accessibility to fine arts courses. Our data suggest high school fine arts participation has remained stable, while middle school participation has increased, especially in 2015–2016, regardless of CLI status.

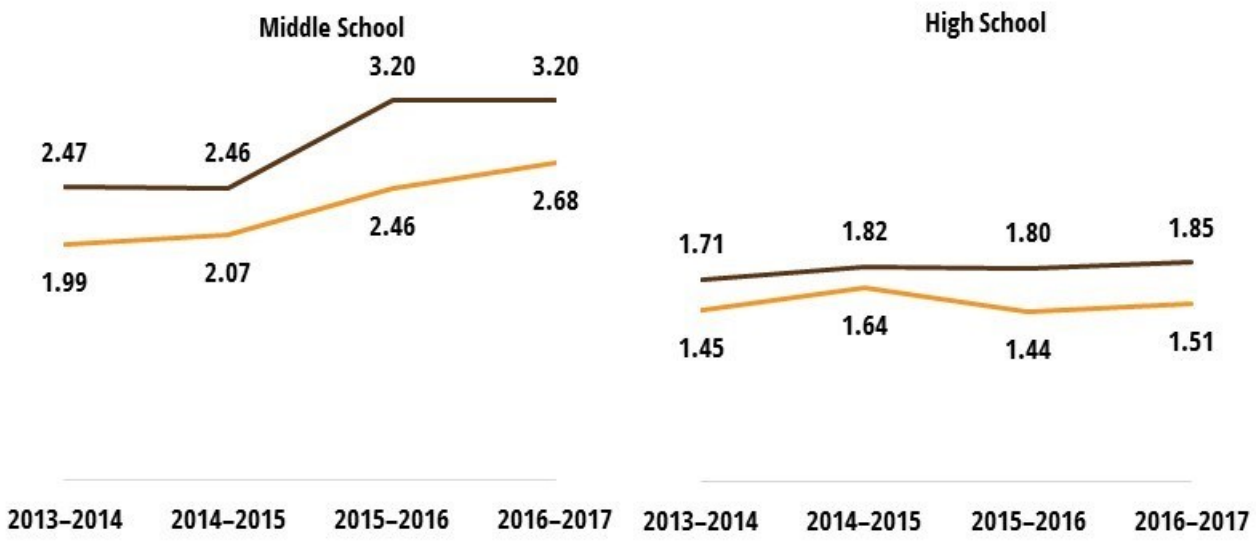
Figure 16.
Since 2013–2014, there has been an increase in the average number of fine arts courses taken by middle school students, but no significant changes in the average number of fine arts courses taken at high school or differences between CLI and non-CLI schools.



Source. AISD student class enrollment records 2013–2014, 2014–2015, 2015–2016, 2016–2017

Despite this good news about the increase of students taking fine arts courses and the positive gains in attendance and academic outcomes as a result in middle school, some important systemic inequalities still exist in the district when we disaggregate these data into Title I and non-Title I schools. In every year and at both levels, Title I students took fewer fine arts courses. And while CLI has been instrumental in supporting this general increase in arts participation, a disparity was seen for non-Title I schools (Figure 17).

Figure 17.
Since 2013, students at non-Title I schools have been taking more fine arts courses than have students in Title I schools. When middle school students increased their participation in 2015–2016, both groups increased, but the gap between Title-I and non-Title I students widened.



Source. AISD student class enrollment records 2013–2014, 2014–2015, 2015–2016, 2016–2017

Sequential Fine Arts Finding 5: Music and visual arts courses comprised approximately 70% of fine arts courses in the district's secondary schools.

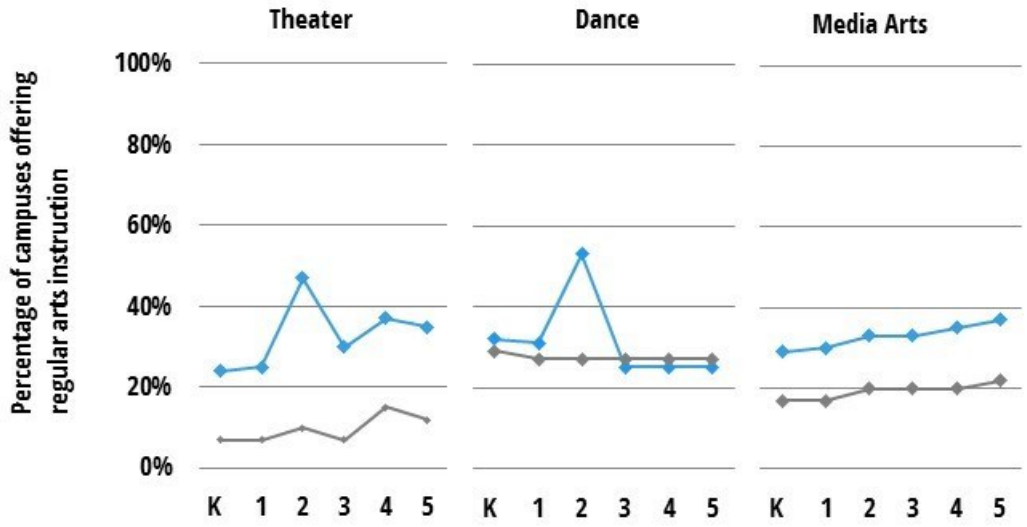
We also looked at the distribution of art forms according to individual student credit earned and unique courses offered in middle and high schools. We found the distribution to be fairly consistent across method of counting, whether by courses offered or credits earned, and fairly uniform across campuses and level. At the district level, 40% of the fine arts credits earned in secondary schools were in music, 30% in visual arts, 20% in theater, and 10% in dance. When we looked at the types of unique courses offered in each art form, the breakdown was similar. This breakdown was fairly consistent across all campuses (i.e., CLI and non-CLI campuses, and surprisingly, Title 1 and non-Title I campuses), with the only overall distinction being the size of the campus. Not surprisingly, smaller schools tended to offer less variety of unique courses, but we might expect the proportion of art forms represented to be the same. However, we notice that Eastside Memorial and Ann Richards offered a higher percentage of their unique courses in music, and a lower percentage in the other art forms. This may not be entirely meaningful if we remember this is just the count of unique courses offered, and music can have different courses, based on the instrument played. It also makes sense, for example, that Garza Independent High School, which promotes a self-paced learning option for students and relies on web-based courses for many of its offerings, might offer more unique courses in visual arts and relatively fewer in music. While some differences are inevitable, CLI will continue to promote access to a diversity of art forms for every student. Further research is needed to look at how participation in these different art forms affects student outcomes and the breakdown of student participation in the sequential fine arts according to student demographics (e.g., gender, race, SES, English language status, special education status, and prior academic performance).

Sequential Fine Arts Finding 6: CLI elementary campuses offered a greater diversity of art forms than did non-CLI campuses. Especially at CLI sustaining campuses, opportunities to learn in diverse art forms went above and beyond opportunities directly supported by CLI.

While all elementary students are scheduled to receive regular instruction in music and visual arts, the district data suggest that AISD elementary students across the district continued to have limited access to theater, dance, and media arts, although they were more likely to experience them at CLI campuses than at non-CLI campuses.

As shown Figure 18, approximately 50% of CLI campuses reported that their 2nd-grade students received regular instruction in theater and dance. CLI systematically supports access to theater and dance for most 2nd-grade students in its schools, but sometimes this support is offered to other grades at the principal's request. Students at non-CLI campuses received considerably less instruction in theater and media arts than students at CLI campuses. Although not a positive outcome, the difference in the availably of regular instruction in media arts is particularly exciting, because CLI encourages these efforts yet does not directly support them. Anecdotal evidence suggests a bleed-over effect: when schools recognize the value gained from additional arts offerings supported by CLI, they are inclined to find ways to support additional opportunities in sequential fine arts when possible.

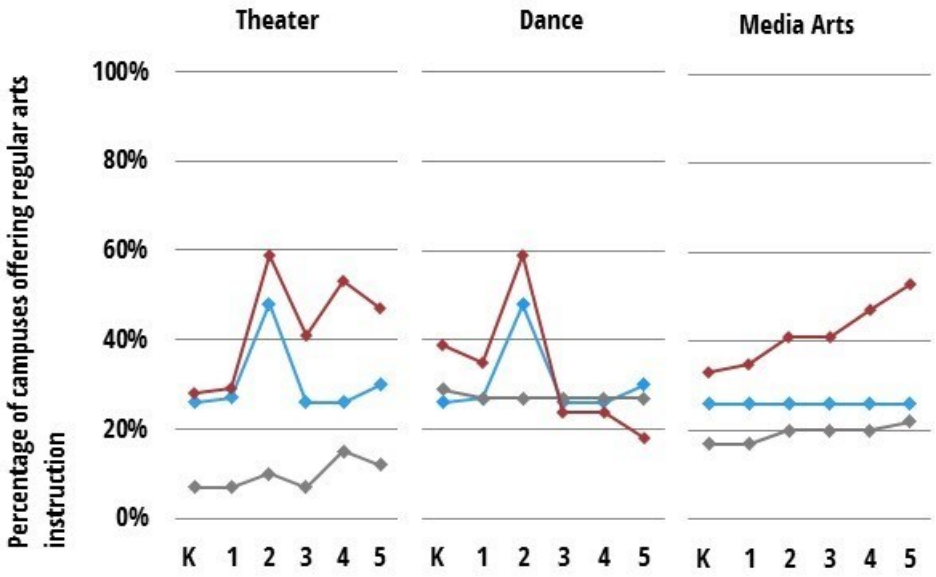
Figure 18.
Students at CLI campuses had more exposure than students at non-CLI campuses to sequential fine arts instruction in theater and media arts at every grade, and in dance in kindergarten through grade 2.



Source. 2016–2017 elementary school arts inventory
Note. Forty-one CLI campuses and 43 non-CLI campuses were included for analysis. K means kindergarten. Response options included *not offered during school day, at least 45 minutes every 3rd day all year long (40 meetings), at least once a week all year long (24+ meetings), at least once a week for one semester (12 -23 meetings), and other rotation (6–11 meetings).*

Sustaining campuses, too, seem to be exhibiting signs of a bleed-over effect. When disaggregated by CLI schools that are sustaining (i.e., were doing the initiative the longest), we notice increases in all areas, but particularly in theater and media arts. More grades were getting access to more art forms the longer they were in CLI, despite any financial increase from CLI (Figure 19).

Figure 19.
Students at CLI sustaining schools continued to see more gains in their access to sequential fine arts, when compared with foundational CLI schools and non-CLI schools.

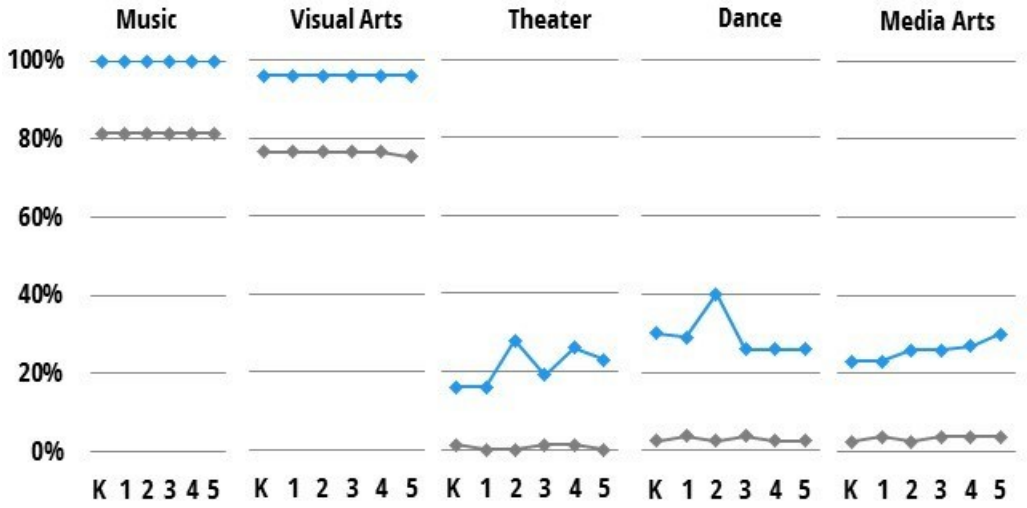


Source. 2016–2017 elementary school arts inventory
Note. Twenty-three foundational campuses, 18 sustaining campuses, and 41 non-CLI campuses were included for analysis. K means kindergarten. Response options included *not offered during school day, at least 45 minutes every 3rd day all year long (40 meetings), at least once a week all year long (24+ meetings), at least once a week for one semester (12-23 meetings), and other rotation (6–11 meetings).*

Sequential Fine Arts Finding 7: All elementary campuses have shown increased offerings in all art forms since CLI began.

Since the beginning of CLI in 2012–2013, all elementary schools have increased the number of art forms available to their students (Figure 20). Through the increased attention brought to the Texas expectations for regular music and visual arts, almost all schools are now meeting the expectation. In addition, AISD elementary students went from getting almost no regular instruction in theater, dance, and media arts to approximately one-third of district elementary students getting these opportunities. As CLI expands, both in terms of direct support offered and also in terms of the general awareness and cultural presence of the arts in elementary education, we expect to see more children with more exposure to more art forms as the practiced norm, rather than an exceptional accomplishment.

Figure 20.
From 2011–2012 when CLI began, through 2016-2017, all elementary grades saw increased access to the arts in all fine arts subjects.



Source. 2016–2017 elementary school arts inventory (n = 85), 2011–2012 elementary school arts inventory (n = 85)

While we can demonstrate increases in arts access, the intended long-term outcome of this intervention (i.e., that students will engage in those arts forms at higher levels when they reach secondary schools) will take several years to manifest. Specifically, the earliest we can begin to look into the long-term impact of this intervention would be in 2019–2020, when the first cohort of students to receive steady instruction in by the dance and drama specialists will have finished middle school.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In light of CLI's goal to foster high-quality sequential fine arts for every district student, we asked the question "How is access to sequential fine arts currently distributed in AISD, and how is that affecting students?" In terms of the arts' impact on students, our research supported the previous findings of national and state level research: in AISD, secondary students who completed more fine arts courses were more likely to attend school and more likely to pass STAAR reading, math, and science than were those who completed fewer fine arts courses. These findings might be explained by the higher level of instructional practice in secondary fine arts classes, compared with classes in other secondary departments. However, our findings also showed that inequalities exist between Title I and non-Title I campuses, as students at Title I campuses completed fewer fine arts courses than did those at non-Title I campus. Meanwhile, in elementary campuses, the findings suggest dramatic progress since the beginning of the initiative, especially in bringing a diversity of art forms to elementary students. As these students grow, we will be excited to research the long-term impact of those formative experiences.

Recommendation #1: Promote the positive impacts of participation in the fine arts during course scheduling. Moving forward, we recommend the positive association of participation in sequential fine arts with higher attendance and better academic outcomes be promoted at the district level to inform the process of secondary student's

course selection. Ideally, parents, students, and counselors should relate to sequential fine arts courses as essential aids toward holistic achievement, and not simply as optional course taken just for fun.

Recommendation #2: Leverage strategic fine arts opportunities to increase student attendance. These data suggest greater attendance rates among students with high participation in the arts than among students with low participation in the arts. Given the relationship of attendance with ADA revenue, the district could frame funding more opportunities for participation in the arts as an investment rather than expense. Although a common response to budgetary restrictions tends to be to cut the arts, our data suggest a possible attendance payoff from investing in arts opportunities that strategically attract students with low attendance.

Recommendation #3: Identify why some secondary schools have significantly more or less participation in the arts. In the previous chapter, data showed that at the district level, Title I and non-Title I schools are now equitably arts rich, largely due to CLI's support of Title I schools. This district-level approach to equity, however, does not capture the inequities in sequential fine arts participation found in AISD's secondary schools. CLI Program leaders should continue to champion equity for all students to enjoy high-quality arts education by investigating why some schools have more or less participation in the fine arts. We recommend not only looking internally to uncover patterns within AISD, but also looking for other similar districts that have addressed systemic inequalities in arts participation. Bearing in mind the positive associations of fine arts participation with student outcomes such as graduation, academic achievement and school engagement, this an important equity issue that should take priority.

Recommendation #4: Discover best practices of sustaining schools in promoting more art forms to elementary students. Finally, our research shows that CLI sustaining campuses are managing to continue and to increase their emphasis on regular exposure to diverse art forms in elementary schools, even beyond the scope of CLI's support. While this is great news, the mechanism for how it is happening is currently unclear. We recommend program leaders research and share how these successful sustaining campuses are funding their support for additional arts subjects, how they are scheduling it, and how they are structuring the learning experiences. As more campuses become sustaining CLI campuses, these lessons can help others develop robust fine arts programs for our young people.

Creative Teaching

Program Description and Goals

Creative instruction across the curriculum is a critical pillar of CLI. The initiative dedicates most of its human and financial resources to supporting a professional development model that empowers teachers to use a set of vetted Creative Teaching strategies to enhance students' learning. Unlike many forms of arts integration, which match a prescribed arts standard with an academic standard within the curriculum, the Creative Teaching strategies draw on techniques from drama, visual arts, music, movement, and digital media as the instructional framework to engage students, drive inquiry, promote rigor, and create personal connections to the material in any content area. The Creative Teaching strategies selected for inclusion in the initiative provide opportunities for development or generation of ideas, creative choice making, analysis and synthesis, mental and physical modeling, point of view, and translation of ideas (using different symbol systems), transfer learning to different contexts, as well as the opportunity to share ideas with others (Figure 21). These essential elements of Creative Teaching are natural and logical extensions of many powerful instructional theories, aligning most with brain-based pedagogy, socio-constructivist learning theory, multiple intelligence theory, project-based learning, total physical response, and schema development.

Figure 21.
Essential Elements of Creative Teaching

Source. MINDPOP

CLI's goal for arts-rich schools is that 75% to 100% of the teachers are competent in using Creative Teaching strategies and use them throughout their curricula, at least once a week. To attain this goal for each campus in the district, one new vertical team is added each year to the CLI professional development model, and one vertical team graduates to sustaining status. For schools just beginning CLI, the Creative Teaching professional development model starts with skill-based workshops, led by CLI staff and representatives of local arts organizations. Administrators at CLI schools commit to scheduling two professional development workshops per year for their entire teaching

staff for 3 years.[4] In the first year of adoption, they study drama-based strategies; in the second year, they study visual-arts-based strategies; and in the third year, they study music- and movement-based strategies. The workshops teach how to successfully facilitate the specific arts-based strategies; when to use the strategies within the lesson cycle or in the curriculum; and why to use a particular strategy for cognitive, social, artistic, or academic gains.

The CLI professional development model extends the skill-based workshops with ongoing coaching opportunities that integrate arts-based strategies with core curriculum content. During planning sessions, the coach usually works with grade-level teams (elementary) or subject teams (secondary) to develop teachers' skills in the selection of an appropriate Creative Teaching strategy to achieve specific learning objectives. Together, they select the strategy and then plan an effective lesson outline. During the modeling, the coach demonstrates or co-teaches sessions with specific strategies in the classroom. After the modeling or co-teaching, the coach and teacher reflect on the experience and discuss the implementation of the instruction. During these visits, coaches gather information on frequency of strategy use in the classroom and assess each teacher on his or her ongoing development of competency to implement the strategies (see analysis method on page 31 for more information about methodology and Appendix C for Creative Teaching Competency Rubric).

Beyond the core professional development opportunities that CLI provides schools in their first 3 (foundational) years of being a CLI school, the initiative also works to keep Creative Teaching active on sustaining campuses by training teacher leaders on those campuses. Three leaders from each sustaining campus, called creative learning leaders, are trained and supported to deliver refresher courses in Creative Teaching and support the principal to draft and implement the Creative Campus plan. Creative learning leaders attend a 3-day academy as well as quarterly meetings designed to build their capacity to lead campus-level change. CLI offers several stand-alone professional development opportunities, including refresher courses for teachers at sustaining schools, summer workshops, and short content-specific courses that are open to any teacher in the district. These are sometimes taught by the CLI staff, sometimes by arts partners, and often by both.

This robust professional development model is ultimately designed to build Creative teaching skills in teachers of all grade levels and all subjects. By the end of the 3-year foundational program, the goal is that at arts-rich schools, at least 75% of teachers are competent in using Creative Teaching strategies and use them throughout their curricula at least once a week. To measure progress toward this ambitious goal, and to guide program improvement, we use survey data from the teachers and implementation assessments from the coaches to understand how teaching practices are affected by the program activities. From there, we relate data about teacher implementation to

Competency in Creative Teaching

CLI coaches help develop competency in Creative Teaching by working with teachers to develop planning and classroom facilitation skills (see Appendix C for Creative Teaching Competency Rubric).

Planning Creative Teaching competency standards:

Meets expectations—teacher consistently identifies and pairs goals and objectives with Creative Teaching strategies, and assesses effectiveness to inform future instruction.

Exceeds expectations—teacher fluently plans Creative Teaching lessons aligned with objectives that include rigorous reflection questions, opportunities for assessment, and builds off of previous lessons.

Facilitating Creative Teaching standards:

Meets expectations—teacher consistently facilitates Creative Teaching and assesses and adjusts instruction during the lesson to engage and differentiate for most students in a learning process to promote student-led inquiry and deeper understanding.

Exceeds expectations—teacher facilitates Creative Teaching with fidelity and fluently assesses and adjusts instruction during the lesson to engage and differentiate for all students equitably in a rigorous learning process that requires students to use all six Creative Teaching elements to promote student-led inquiry, metacognition and deeper understanding.

[4] The workshops were developed by MINDPOP and partners with field experts, including Katie Dawson and Lara Dossett from Drama for Schools, Krissie Marty from Forklift Dance, Emily Cayton and Hanna Zurko from The Contemporary Austin, Dr. Tina Curran and Dr, Megan Alrutz from The University of Texas at Austin, and Marcelo Teson and Charlie Lockwood from Texas Folklife Resources. Workshop facilitators are drawn from these organizations, as well as Creative Action, Paramount, ZACH Theatre, Ballet Austin, Austin Soundwaves, and others.

desirable student outcomes, trying to answer both parts of the question: how did Creative Teaching affect teacher and student outcomes?

How did Creative Teaching affect students?

Key Findings and Interpretation

Creative Teaching Finding 1: Elementary students whose teachers were more competent in Creative Teaching had better attendance than did students whose teachers were less competent in Creative Teaching.

Teacher implementation competency in Creative Teaching strategies was significantly related to student attendance rates ($p < .05$), controlling for teachers' overall teaching proficiency and students' SES. In other words, students were more likely to attend school if their teachers were more competent in Creative Teaching than if their teachers were less competent, regardless of the students' SES or their teachers' overall teaching proficiency. At the elementary level, students whose teachers were highly competent in Creative Teaching had an average of 1.1 more days in school than did students whose teachers' competency was low in Creative Teaching. While this may seem trivial at first glance, this difference has a substantial impact on the ADA funding received by the district. If the attendance rate of all other elementary students captured in our data could be raised to that of the student group whose teachers were highly competent in Creative Teaching, the overall difference attendance would equate to approximately $70,400 in district ADA funding.

Elementary students whose teachers were highly competent in Creative Teaching had an average of 1.1 more days in school than did students whose teacher's competency was low in Creative Teaching.

More importantly than ADA, attendance is often a precursor to many other positive student outcomes. If we could change attendance with competency in Creative Teaching, this could help students in other ways, too. The relationship between competency in these specific Creative Teaching strategies and attendance is particularly noteworthy because our cohort of CLI campuses has historically had a 1% lower attendance rate than the non-CLI campuses. This is probably related to the fact that the current CLI campuses are predominantly Title I schools, and there is a strong relationship between the percentage of students with low SES and the average attendance rates (elementary $r = -0.74$, $p < .0001$; secondary $r = -0.53$, $p < 0.0425$). By fostering competency in Creative Teaching at CLI schools, data suggest that we are beginning to address an important need in our district.

Creative Teaching Analysis Method

For the purposes of evaluating the impact of the Creative Teaching strategies on student outcomes, we limited our analysis to the group of elementary teachers who received coaching (n = 560) at foundational campuses and for whom we have data on both their competency and frequency of use. Some limitations of this sample group are obvious: we missed the opportunity to understand the impact of Creative Teaching at sustaining campuses, where many teachers completed the entire sequence of professional development activities in Creative Teaching, and the impact on students in 6th through 12th grade all together. Less obvious limitations are that we mixed together data from teachers in their 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year of implementation, as well as merged the impacts of strategies from different art forms. Furthermore, by limiting our analysis to teachers for whom we had coaching assessment of competency, we also excluded teachers who might have opted out of the coaching process. At some schools, teachers might be permitted to opt out because they already feel masterful in these skills or because they do not see positive value in learning them. Finally, in the analysis of relationships between the teachers' implementation of Creative Teaching and student outcomes, we controlled for two other variables that were theorized to interact with implementation: (a) the teachers' overall teaching proficiency and (b) students' SES. The rationale for including these variables in our model is explained below.

To ensure that we were not confounding good overall teaching with good Creative Teaching, we controlled for the overall teaching proficiency, using spring scores from the instructional practice observation score of the district's teacher appraisal system. The Instructional Practice Observation Rubric is content neutral and measures pedagogical skills related to student engagement, assessment and feedback, differentiation, problem solving and critical thinking, classroom expectations, routines and procedures, and classroom climate. Teaching proficiency was significantly correlated with teacher competency in using Creative Teaching strategies ($r = .25$, $p < 0.05$) and teachers' frequency of using Creative Teaching strategies ($r = .17$, $p < 0.05$). By controlling for those relationships, our analyses were able to estimate the unique influence of Creative Teaching on student outcomes, above and beyond the influence of overall teaching proficiency.

We also controlled for SES, but for different reasons. Numerous studies indicate strong correlations between SES and academic achievement, which was supported by our data regarding AISD students. To give some idea of the strength of the relationship, even at the campus level, we found a strong correlation between the percentage of students on a campus who qualified for free or reduced lunch and all student outcomes, with the weakest negative relationship between SES and the percentage of students meeting the STAAR science standard ($r = .71$, $p < 0.05$) and the strongest negative relationship on the percentage of students meeting the STAAR advanced reading standard ($r = .95$, $p < 0.05$). The influence of SES is so strong, that it needs to be silenced in order to hear the influence of other factors. In our multilinear regression analysis of elementary student outcomes, we controlled for each child's individual SES, as determined by free or reduced lunch status from school records, in order to best capture the unique influence of Creative Teaching.

Creative Teaching Finding 2: Elementary students had better SEL skills when teachers were more competent in Creative Teaching than when they were less competent in Creative Teaching.

Additionally, findings demonstrated that teachers' competency in Creative Teaching was significantly positively related to students' social and emotional learning (SEL) skills ($p < .05$), controlling for teachers' overall teaching proficiency and students' SES. When teachers were more competent in implementing Creative Teaching strategies, their students were more likely to have better emotional self-awareness and better emotional awareness of others. At the elementary school level, teachers rate students on their personal development skills at each grading period. From those ratings, we selected the Emotional Awareness of Self and Others subscale as a measurement of students' SEL skills to examine the relationship between students' SEL skills and Creative Teaching. Because the Emotional Awareness of Self and Others subscale was significant as a whole, we also analyzed the individual questions in the subscale to better understand the nature of the relationships. (Figure 22).

Figure 22.
Students had greater emotional skill scores on 4 out of 5 emotional skills related to emotional awareness whose teachers' Creative Teaching implementation competency level was high (n = 3,516) than whose teachers' implementation competency level was low (n = 2,772).

Source. 2016–2017 CLI coach records, Emotional Awareness of Self and Others subscale from 2016–2017 AISD Elementary Student Personal Development Skills Report Card
Note. Teachers' implementation competency level was divided into quartiles; this examines the top and bottom quartiles as "high" and "low." Response options ranged from 1 = rarely to 4 = consistently.

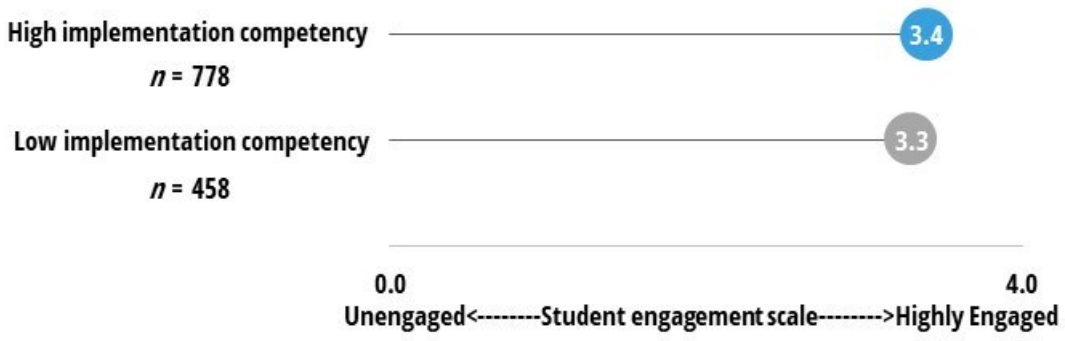
Teacher's perceptions support these findings. Of 615 teachers surveyed, 89% reflected that changes in their teaching practices due to the adoption of Creative Teaching had a positive impact on student behavior.[5]

[5] 2016–2017 Creative Learning Initiative Coaching Survey.

Creative Teaching Finding 3: Elementary students had better engagement when teachers were more competent in Creative Teaching than when they were less competent in Creative Teaching.

Teacher implementation competency in Creative Teaching strategies was found to be significantly positively related to the student engagement scale of the Climate Survey ($p < .05$), controlling for teachers' overall proficiency and students' SES (Figure 23). In other words, students were more likely to be engaged in school when their teachers were more competent in Creative Teaching than when their teachers were less competent in Creative Teaching.

Figure 23.
Students whose teachers were more competent in Creative Teaching were better engaged in school than whose teachers were less competent.



Source. 2016–2017 CLI coach records, Student Engagement subscale of AISD Student Climate Survey 2016–2017
Note. Response options for seven student engagement items ranged from 1 = never to 4 = a lot of the time. Those seven responses were averaged to create a subscale, ranging from 0 = unengaged to 4 = engaged. Teachers' implementation competency scores were divided into high and low quartiles.

Student engagement scores were derived from a subset of seven questions on the 2016–2017 AISD Student Climate Survey:

- *I like to come to school.
- *My schoolwork makes me think about things in new ways.
- *I have fun learning in my classes.
- I enjoy doing my schoolwork.
- My homework helps me learn the things I need to know.
- My teachers connect what I am doing to my life outside the classroom.
- I receive recognition or praise for doing good work.

Program leaders judged three of these statements (i.e., those indicated by asterisks) to be most relevant to the implementation of CLI, so we analyzed these statements individually. Teacher competency in Creative Teaching was significantly related to student's responses to the following statements: "I like to go to school" ($p < .05$) and "I have fun learning in school" ($p < .05$). These findings are aligned with the perceptions of the teachers, 96% of whom believed the professional development opportunities they received through CLI changed their teaching practices in a way that more activity engaged students in their learning.

While significant positive results in engagement are often found in conjunction with positive academic achievement, we did not find consistent trends in the relationship between teacher implementation of Creative Teaching in the classroom and students' academic achievement in this year's data. Previous years' findings suggested that academic achievement was related to the implementation of Creative Teaching, and we were surprised to find that those results did not replicate. It was not possible to apply this year's methodology to previous years' data, due to missing data about overall teaching proficiency, but we were able to apply last year's methodology (which did not control for teacher proficiency or students' SES) to this year's data. When we did, a similar pattern emerged, wherein holistic gains were determined to be significant, and academic achievement gains were inconclusive. These findings did not align with the perceptions of teachers, 90% of whom said that changes in their teaching practices due to professional development opportunities in Creative Teaching had a positive impact on student achievement. Possible explanations for this thematic gap in our findings will be explored in the following section, but fundamentally, it will take time and continued research to understand the changes in outcomes from year to year.

Students whose teachers were competent in Creative Teaching were statistically more likely to "like to go to school" and "have fun learning" than were students whose teachers were less competent in Creative Teaching.

Given the irregular nature of the 2016–2017 outcomes in relation to academic achievement, we considered the following challenges to implementation as possible causes:

Change in cohort. Each year, CLI serves three foundational vertical teams, and therefore, each year, a third of the population is changed. Different schools come with different strengths and weaknesses, and it is possible the coaching staff may not have been equally adept at serving the needs of this year's cohort related to academic achievement.

Change in staffing. This year saw a new CLI director; several new coaches; and several changes to implementation, including more focus on secondary and sustaining schools. In addition, one coach had some serious health issues, and another coach had a change in job role. In a team of six people, these challenges might have prevented the coaching staff from realizing the same results as in previous years.

Overall low implementation. Though the number of teachers who were coached increased in 2016–2017, the average contact time with each teacher declined, as did the average teacher perception of their coaches' quality, and the average teacher's competency of implementation. The challenges of implementation in 2016–2017 will be explored more, but suffice it to say that the differences in implementation might have been an explanation for difference in findings related to academic achievement this year.

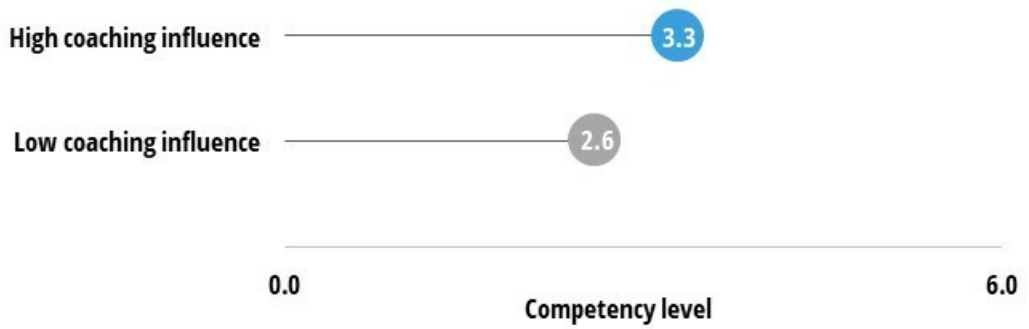
Future investigations will continue to monitor the relationship between Creative Teaching and academic outcomes, particularly in regard to the level of teacher competency.

Despite challenges to implementation in 2016–2017, Creative Teaching was still shown to be effective at increasing many important student outcomes: attendance, engagement, and SEL skills. Our next program evaluation task was to look at the implementation data and try to determine what, if anything, was associated with teacher competency in Creative Teaching. In our preliminary analysis, we considered both the impact of program activities (quality of the coach, number of interactions between coach and teacher, and type of coaching performed), as well as important differences in our teacher population that might influence the adoption of Creative Teaching (years of professional experience, overall teaching proficiency, their perceptions of school leadership and teacher autonomy on their campuses). Using a stepwise regression model, we determined that the variables that contributed most to teacher competency in Creative Teaching were overall teaching proficiency, the teachers' perceptions of the coaches' skills, and the total time spent with the coach. Our analysis showed that neither of the individual program variables (i.e., those within the program's sphere of control; specifically, teachers' perceptions of the coaches' skills and the total time spent with the coach) significantly predicted teacher competency in Creative Teaching by themselves, but that the product of the two was predictive of teacher outcomes. We call the product of these two variables the *coaching influence*.

Creative Teaching Finding 4: Teachers used Creative Teaching strategies more competently when they experienced greater CLI coaching influence (i.e., more time with a coach they rated as more skilled) than when they experienced less CLI coaching influence.

CLI coaching influence was a significant factor contributing to teachers' competency in using Creative Teaching strategies, ($p < .05$; Figure 24). The value of coaching influence is the individual teacher's assessment of his or her CLI coach's skills (0 = unskilled through 5 = very skilled) multiplied by the time the coach spent with the teacher.

Figure 24.
CLI teachers were more competent in using Creative Teaching strategies when the coaching influence was high than when the coaching influence was low.



Source. 2016–2017 CLI coach records, 2016–2017 Creative Learning Initiative Coaching Survey, *n* = 86
Note. The coaching influence was divided into quartiles; the top and bottom quartiles were analyzed as high and low. Teachers' competency level was based on a 6-point Likert-scale, ranging from 1 = does not know Creative Teaching techniques, to 6 = has advanced skills at using Creative Teaching techniques.

CLI coaching influence was also significantly related to teachers' more frequent use of Creative Teaching strategies ($p < .05$), meaning that teachers who experienced high CLI coaching influence used Creative Teaching strategies more frequently than did those who experienced low coaching influence (Figure 25). While this year's research did not show frequency of strategy use to be related to student outcomes, we continue to monitor this relationship because prior research has shown positive relationships with frequency of use.

Figure 25.
CLI teachers used Creative Teaching strategies more frequently when the coaching influence was high than when the coaching influence was low.

Source. 2016–2017 CLI coach records, 2016–2017 Creative Learning Initiative Coaching Survey, *n* = 115
Note. The coaching influence was divided into high and low by quartile. Teachers' frequency level was based on a 5 point likert-scale (1 = less than once a week, 2 = once a week, 3 = 2–4 times a week, 4 = 5 times a week, and 5 = more than 5 times a week).

Creative Teaching Finding 4: On average, it takes about 3 hours of coaching to arrive at competency in Creative Teaching.

We know that contact time with a coach is part of the factor that predicts Creative Teaching competency, but how much time is needed to meet the program goal of becoming proficient? We found that, on average, teachers who were rated as proficient or better in using Creative Teaching strategies had 189 minutes (or approximately 3 hours) of coaching (Figure 26). Those who were less competent had less coaching.

Of course, this 3-hour average is not a simple recipe for success, but we can note a steady increase of about 20 minutes per degree of increased competency, with the lowest levels of competency being recorded at 130 minutes and a degree of increase for each 20 minutes after that. In our analysis, we combined the three highest levels of proficiency because level 4 met the program objective and very few exceeded the objective, scoring 5 or 6. The higher scores are sometimes used by the program to identify teachers as candidates for campus-based leadership opportunities.

Rating Creative Teaching Competency

CLI coaches rated teachers' competence on the following six-point scale:

1 = does not know Creative Teaching techniques

2 = is at the beginning level of using Creative Teaching techniques

3 = is somewhat proficient at Creative Teaching techniques

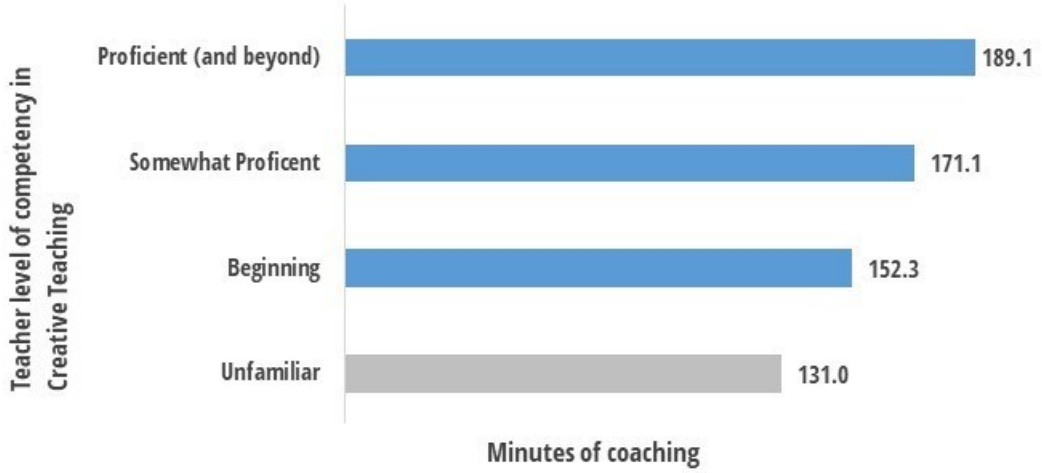
4 = is proficient at Creative Teaching techniques

5 = is very proficient at Creative Teaching techniques

6 = has advanced skills at using Creative Teaching techniques

Figure 26.

On average, 3 hours of coaching time (189.1 minutes) seems to be the tipping point at which teachers had enough coaching to be proficient or beyond in Creative Teaching.



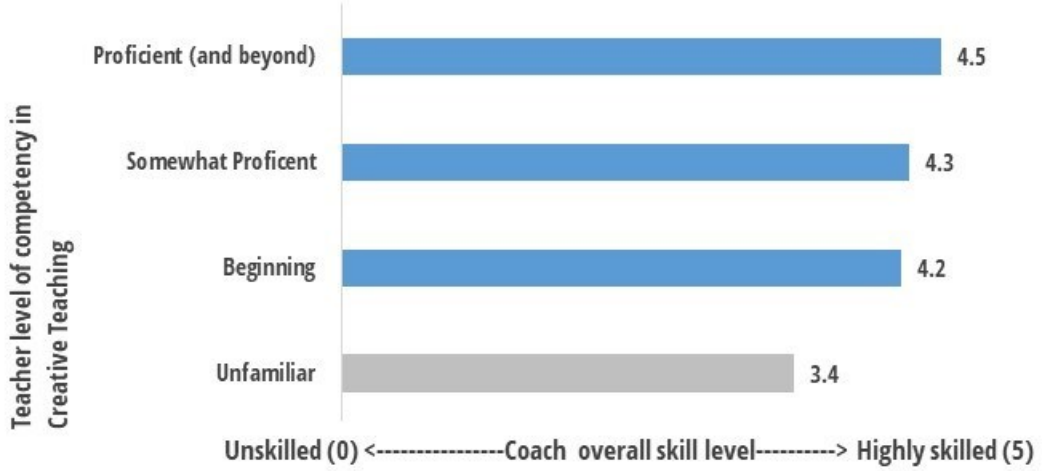
Source. 2016–2017 CLI Coach Records, *n* = 215

Creative Teaching Finding 5: On average, teachers needed to rate their coach as highly skilled (4.5 out of 5) to establish the relationship to build toward competency in Creative Teaching.

The other component of coach influence predicting teacher competency was the teachers' perceptions of the coaches' skills. Teachers who met the program goal of competency in Creative Teaching rated their coaches to be highly skilled (4.5 on average, on a 5-point scale, with 1 being not skilled and 5 being highly skilled). Though most teachers rated their coaches as highly skilled, the small differences in their ratings were predictive of their eventual competency at Creative Teaching (Figure 27). Relationships are important when building new skills in the classroom, and the data support that is the case for CLI coaches, as well.

Figure 27.

On average, teachers who rated their coach as highly skilled had enough respect and professional regard for their coach to foster their proficiency in Creative Teaching at the level required by the program.

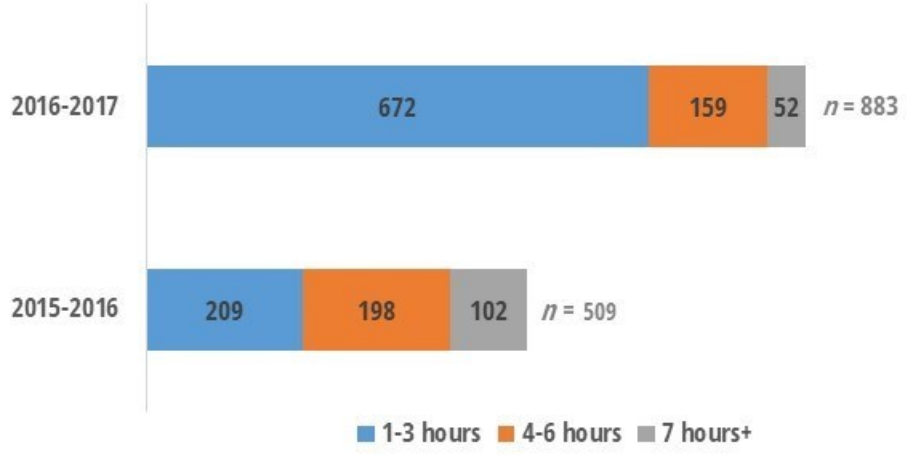


Source. 2016–2017 CLI coach records, 2016-2017 Creative Learning Initiative Coaching Survey, n = 215
Note. Teachers were asked a series of questions (e.g., about their coach regarding their perception of the coach's expertise, use of the teacher's time, effectiveness of communication). Average responses to these individual items were strongly correlated to responses to one question that asked teachers to rate the overall quality of their coach from 0 = unskilled to 5 = very skilled. Because the relationship was so strong (r = .9), we used the overall question instead of the mean of all responses in the series.

Creative Teaching Finding 6: The rate and perceived quality of coaching implementation decreased in 2016–2017.

While exploring the more complicated relationships related to coaching and teacher implementation, we observed some changes from 2015–2016 to 2016–2017 in how coaches implemented their work. In 2015–2016, CLI had four full-time CLI coaches who served the foundational campuses and managed to see an average of 127 teachers each for an average of 288 minutes, whereas the 4.5 full-time coaches in 2016–2017 saw an average of 196 teachers for 218 minutes each. These averages, however, do not accurately represent the distribution of time among teachers. In 2016–2017, 672 teachers received less than 3 hours each, and 20 individuals received more than 10 hours each. Figure 28 shows a difference in approach in 2016–2017, whereby more teachers were seen for less time than in the previous year. In 2015–2016, 59% of teachers who had been coached received more than 3 hours of coaching, but in 2016–2017, that percentage dropped to 24%. Given our analysis showing the importance of the amount of contact time between coaches and teachers, lower competency scores would be expected, and that was confirmed. In 2015–2016 the average teacher competency was a 3.55, rated on a scale from 1 to 6, with 4 as the programmatic standard for acceptable competency. In 2016–2017, many more teachers were observed, but the average competency score was down to 2.78. Data revealed that coaches were spread more thinly in 2016–2017; they worked with more teachers, but therefore were not able to spend the same amount of time with each teacher as they did in 2015–2016.

Figure 28.
Coaches saw 3 times as many teachers for 1 to 3 hours 2016–2017 as they did in 2015–2016 through group coaching.



Source. 2015–2016 and 2016–2017 CLI coach records
Note. Group and individual coaching time was combined for each teacher and rounded to the nearest hour.

To some extent, this approach to implementation was a deliberate choice. Of the 4.5 coaches in 2016–2017, one was newly reallocated to focus on secondary schools, thereby decreasing the amount of coaching that had previously been allocated to elementary schools. On the other hand, unavoidable circumstances related to illness prevented one of the coaches from providing coaching most of the year. So, functionally, the foundational elementary schools decreased from four full-time coaches in 2015–2016, to 2.5 coaches in 2016–2017. Since most of the changes in inputs (i.e., reductions in

coaching) took place at the elementary level, it is expected that programmatic student outcomes (also measured primarily at the elementary level) would also be affected.

Not only did teachers receive fewer average minutes of coaching in 2016–2017 than in 2015–2016, they also received much more of their coaching in small groups than they had previously. Group coaching is significantly related to teacher competency, but not as strongly as the total amount of time. For context, in 2015–2016, 74% of coached teachers experienced individual coaching, and 78% experienced group coaching, but in 2016–2017, the percentage of teachers who experienced group coaching rose to 97%, while the percentage who experienced individual coaching decreased to 52%. To be clear, this does not suggest that group coaching is significantly less effective than individual coaching; the data do not support that conclusion. Rather, less time spent in coaching is less effective than more time spent in coaching, and when coaching staff are spread thinly, a little bit of group coaching does not compensate for less time with the coach.

Teachers also reported lower levels of satisfaction with the Creative Teaching coaches in 2016–2017 than they did in 2015–2016. Though few teachers rated their coaches as low quality in either year, they were more likely to do so in 2016–2017 and much more likely to rate their coach as moderately skilled than highly skilled in 2016–2017 than they did in 2015–2016. Each year, we calculated a coaching influence score (teacher rating of their coach's quality multiplied by contact time). In 2015–2016, the average coaching influence was nearly 8 times greater than what it was in 2016–2017.

The academic year 2016–2017 was a challenging academic year for the CLI coaches. They increased the scope of their work to more fully support secondary and sustaining campuses, without a corresponding increase in funding. In addition, they on-boarded a new program director and three new coaches, and had a coach with a serious illness, all while having a change in leadership in the Fine Arts Department. Program leadership is now stabilizing staffing and exploring ways to meet their responsibilities in a climate of district-wide budget cuts.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The long-term goal of CLI's emphasis on Creative Teaching in the classroom is ultimately to improve teaching and learning for all AISD students by linking learning with the power of creativity. Under full implementation, by 2023, at least 75% of AISD teachers will use these arts-based strategies regularly to advance higher-order thinking skills in all grades, in all subjects, and for all students. The data from 2016–2017, half-way through the 10-year rollout, however, are mixed. Although holistic student outcomes were confirmed by the robust methodology employed, previously established academic achievement outcomes came back inconclusive. At the same time, we know that the infrastructure that supports implementation was stretched to beyond capacity, and coaches employed new methods to meet the increased demand. Further research will be needed to determine if the rollout can adjust to the stressors of increased demand and a static budget in a way that continues to deliver strong program outcomes for Creative Teaching in AISD, as we have seen in the past. Bearing in mind the

initiative's long-term goals, we can make the following recommendations based on the findings that characterize this year's successes and challenges:

Recommendation #1: Prioritize competency of use and raise awareness on the elements of competency. When teachers are highly competent in Creative Teaching, their students are more likely to have better attendance, school engagement, and SEL skills than if they are not. Because these desirable outcomes are related to competency, we recommend the coaches prioritize competency in their work with teachers. In recent years, MINDPOP has begun to articulate the elements that define Creative Teaching. Promoting those elements in addition to the Competency Rubric might help align efforts toward competency. It would also be worthwhile to revisit these details of competency with vertical teams who were trained in Creative Teaching before competency was as codified as it is today.

Recommendation #2: Operationalize coach activities and staffing to prioritize the positive perception of coaches' skills and provide ample coaching contact time. The research on Creative Teaching in the classroom shows that getting a teacher to high competency is linked to a combination of two coaching factors: contact time with teachers and teacher's perception of highly skilled coaches. First, coaches will need to establish the foundation of the relationship, based on professional respect. Because using Creative Teaching is not a district mandate, teachers have discretion over their adoption of the strategies. Data suggest that teachers' opinions of the strategies and of the coach predict whether or not they will adopt them and use them competently. One component of being a Creative Teaching coach is creating buy-in—both to the strategies and to themselves as an instructional guide. We recommend coaches get formative feedback from teachers and develop their professional approach based on establishing these essential relationships. Once they have good relationships established, we recommend deploying coaching time by targeting a minimum of 2 hours and an average of 3 hours per year per teacher.

Recommendation #3: Restrategize the deployment of Creative Teaching coaches. The data suggest that almost all CLI teachers think favorably of the CLI professional development opportunities, and that even non-CLI teachers are interested in learning more about CLI. However, despite teachers' high regard for the professional development opportunities offered by CLI, the implementation data on instructional coaching indicated that coaching is being spread thin with the funding structured as it is now. Given scheduled program growth, we can only expect the coach-to-teacher ratio to become smaller yet, and for it to become even more difficult to maximize coach-teacher contact time. If the number of coaches cannot be increased to meet the need of every teacher, the data suggest that spreading them more thinly over more teachers, using the same methods they are currently using, will not yield the desired CLI goal of 75% being competent in Creative Teaching. Alternative methods for program deployment might include leveraging blended learning technology, using a coach-the-coach model when appropriate, targeting one-on-one coaching to teachers who want to be groomed into teacher leaders, and disseminating creative learning through the credentialing of teacher leaders on campuses or instructional leaders from other departments. Program

leaders and district instructional leadership are currently in deep discussions considering their options for the future.

Recommendation #4: Leverage Creative Teaching to close the attendance gap between Title I and non-Title I schools. The current CLI campuses are predominantly Title I schools and have historically had a 1% lower attendance rate than the current non-CLI campuses. Lower attendance results in smaller amounts of ADA revenue, but also less seat time for students in the classroom, and therefore less instructional time. Having all teachers at our current schools supported to be highly competent in Creative Teaching may not only close the gap in attendance rates between Title I and non-Title I schools, but potentially also make strides toward reducing academic performance gaps.

Community Arts Network

Program Description and Goals

The AISD CLI Community Arts Network includes during-school and after-school arts opportunities for students facilitated by community arts partners. Community arts partners (e.g., museums, performing arts organizations, and teaching artists) offer a wide range of opportunities for students—from field trip experiences or performances on campuses to workshops and multi-visit residencies—making them a critical part of an arts-rich school. Community arts partners also provide valuable professional development opportunities for teachers.

CLI's Community Arts Partnership implementation includes:

- Financial support to help CLI campuses secure arts partnerships (CLI schools only)
- Facilitation of arts partnerships by AISD central office leadership and initiative partner, MINDPOP
- Advocacy for arts partnerships by AISD central office leadership and initiative partner, MINDPOP
- Joint AISD- and MINDPOP-hosted arts partner events to connect schools with interested partners
- A directory of AISD schools by arts interest to help partners find schools
- A directory of partners (current and potential) by art area to help schools find partners

Community arts networks are the third pillar of the CLI Creative Campus and are assessed through two components of the Creative Campus Rubric (see Appendices D and E): during-school partnerships and after-school arts opportunities. While during-school partnerships are usually designed to enhance academic learning and expose students to the arts, after-school opportunities offer additional experiences for students to explore an art form in more depth. After-school opportunities might be provided by the school itself or by community arts partners. Together, these components are designed to connect children to their communities through the arts. To guide school engagement with community arts partners, CLI provides arts-richness recommendations in terms of dosage and distribution for each component.

In addition to dosage and distribution across students, CLI is hopeful that students will have the opportunity to see a wide variety of art forms through community partnerships. There is no formal standard in this area, but we include descriptive analyses of it in our campus reports, and here in our district report to inform decision making about different types of exposure. Similarly, CLI is hopeful that all students in a school will be exposed to arts partnerships, not just the students who have signed up for arts classes, and that students will have equitable opportunities to be exposed to community arts partners, regardless of SES. For this reason, the supplemental analysis is disaggregated by Title 1 status. Overall, this chapter presents findings about how AISD schools did at meeting these various goals for each CLI status to better understand program impact, and for each Title I status to better understand the

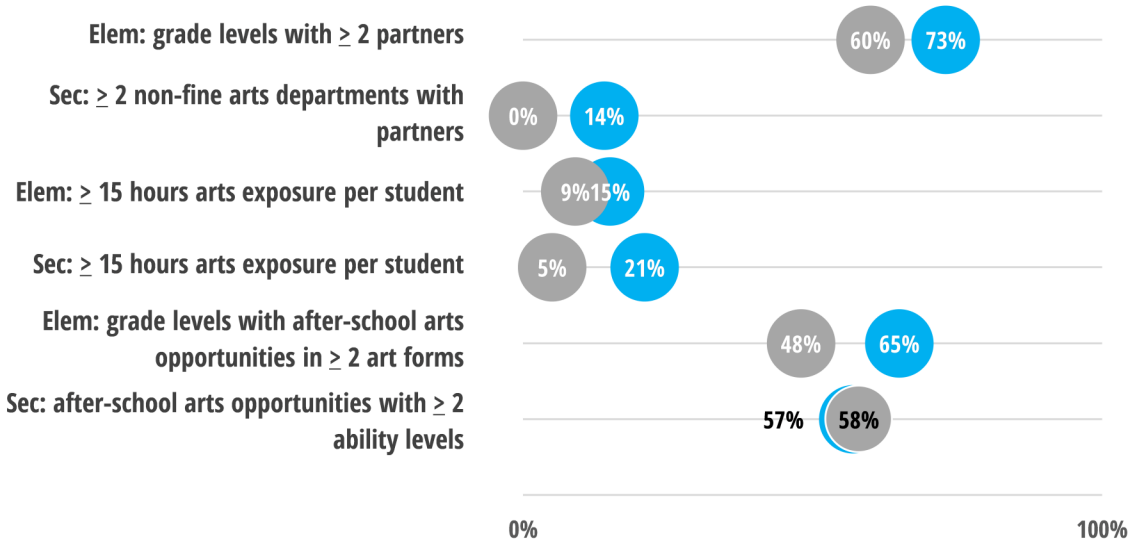
program's impact on the district's highest-need schools and the current distribution of resources across the district.

How were AISD schools engaging with community arts partners?

Key Findings and Interpretation

This year, CLI campuses continued to establish or maintain partnerships with more arts partners than did non-CLI campuses. Community arts partners provided valuable educational resources for schools by offering a wide range of opportunities for students, including field trip experiences, performance on campuses, workshops, and multi-visit residencies. The partnerships were distributed across most grade levels and departments (Figure 29). The organizations most frequently partnered with were Austin Symphony, Austin Jazz Workshop, ZACH Theater, Creative Action, Ballet Austin, Paramount Theater, Tapestry Dance Company, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin Chamber Music Center, and Austin Classical Guitar Society. Arts partners were each rated by their respective principals on the degree the partnership experiences met the school's community arts network objectives (i.e., fully met, mostly met, somewhat met, not met, unclear). In general, most principals felt their arts partners fully met their objectives. Across all elementary arts partners receiving ratings, 96% received a fully met rating; across all secondary arts partners receiving ratings, 91% received a fully met rating.

Figure 29.
The percentage of CLI schools meeting the arts-richness standard surpassed the percentage of non-CLI schools meeting the standard on 5 out of 6 program recommendations for community arts networks; on 1 out of 5 recommendations the difference was negligible.



Source. 2016–2017 AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Inventory
Note. Elem means elementary school, Sec means secondary school.

During-School Partnerships

Community Arts Network Finding 1: Students experienced twice the number of contact hours with arts partners if they were in a CLI school than if they were not in a CLI school.

For the first time in 2016–2017, we calculated a rate of arts exposure per student to approximate the depth of arts-partner experiences during school that were coordinated by the grade-level teams at elementary campuses and by the academic departments at secondary campuses. Using average hours of arts-partner exposure per student provides a level comparison that controls for schools' size differences. Overall, 12% of AISD elementary had 15 hours or more of arts partner exposure per student; this included 15% of CLI elementary schools and 9% of non-CLI elementary schools (Table 2). The 41 CLI elementary schools averaged about 13 hours of arts exposure per student during school, compared with about 6 hours per student at the 43 non-CLI elementary schools.

Table 2.
A greater percentage of CLI elementary schools than of non-CLI elementary schools provided 15 hours or more of arts exposure per student.

	Schools with ≥ 15 hours % (*n*)	Schools with < 15 hours % (*n*)	Average hours per student
CLI	15% (*n* = 6)	85% (*n* = 35)	12.9 hrs.
Non-CLI	9% (*n* = 4)	91% (*n* = 39)	6.1 hrs.
Total	12% (*n* = 10)	88% (*n* = 74)	

Source. 2016–2017 AISD elementary Creative Campus Inventory

Overall, 12% of AISD secondary schools had 15 hours or more of arts partner exposure per student; this included 21% of CLI secondary schools and 5% of non-CLI secondary schools (Table 3). The 14 CLI secondary schools averaged about 9 hours of arts exposure per student during school, compared with about 5 hours per student at the 19 non-CLI secondary schools.

Table 3.
A greater percentage of CLI secondary schools than of non-CLI secondary schools provided 15 hours or more of arts exposure per student.

	Schools with ≥ 15 hours % (*n*)	Schools with < 15 hours % (*n*)	Average hours per student
CLI	21% (*n* = 3)	79% (*n* = 11)	9.2 hrs.
Non-CLI	5% (*n* = 1)	94% (*n* = 18)	5.3 hrs.
Total	12% (*n* = 4)	88% (*n* = 29)	

Source. 2016–2017 AISD secondary Creative Campus Inventory

For further analysis, we combined elementary and secondary school data and disaggregated by Title I status because we wanted to know if students from schools of less means were receiving equitable exposure to arts partnerships. As expected, given the additional funding provided for arts partnerships by CLI, and as demonstrated by the school-level results, when combined, the average hours of arts experiences per student

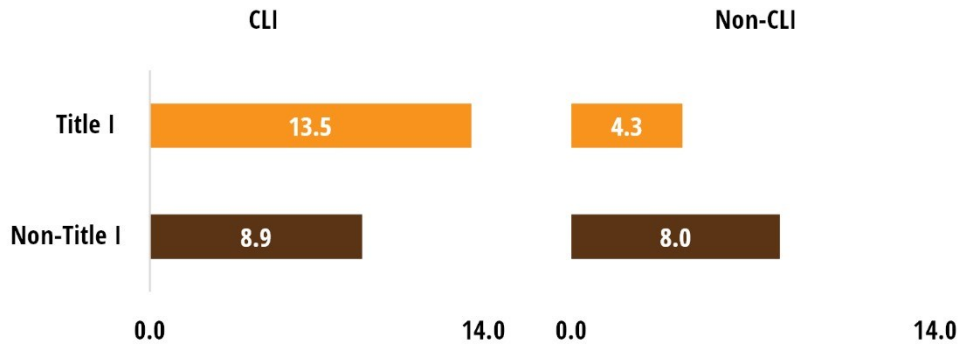
Measuring During-School Partnerships

To be arts rich in during-school partnerships, CLI recommends that all students have a high dosage of arts-partner exposure during the school year. In addition, CLI recommends that schools capitalize on the power of existing curriculum teams so that community arts partners collaborate within a broad distribution of subject areas and reach the widest possible array of students. These standards are set in the Creative Campus Rubric to guide schools toward these values:

- For both elementary and secondary, campuses offer an average of at least 15 hours of arts exposure, per student, during the school year.
- In elementary schools, the recommendation is for each grade level (i.e., prekindergarten [pre-K] through grade 6) to develop partnerships with at least two community arts organizations during-school. Campuses are considered arts rich in this area when they have achieved two partnerships in greater than 70% of grade levels.
- In secondary schools, the recommendation is that at least two non-fine arts departments at each campus coordinate partnerships with community arts organizations during school.

was greater at CLI than at non-CLI campuses. What may have not been expected was that this difference was greatest for Title I campuses (Figure 30). This could be due to CLI Title I campuses focusing their partnership resources to fund fewer partners who provided more intensive arts experiences (e.g., residencies) than did CLI non-Title I campuses.

Figure 30.
The average hours of arts experiences per student at CLI Title I campuses were almost double that at CLI non-Title I campuses.



Source. 2016–2017 elementary Creative Campus Inventory
Note. Within 41 CLI elementary campuses, 36 campuses were Title I and five were non-Title I; within 44 non-CLI elementary campuses, 26 campuses were Title I and 18 were non-Title I.

Community Arts Network Finding 2: CLI elementary schools were more likely than were non-CLI elementary schools to meet the recommendation of having at least two arts partners per grade level.

More CLI schools than non-CLI schools developed partnerships with multiple arts partners across most grade levels. Overall, 67% of AISD elementary schools met the arts-rich standard of having most (>70%) elementary grade levels develop partnerships with at least two community arts organizations during school. Seventy-three percent of CLI elementary schools and 60% of non-CLI elementary schools met this recommendation (Table 4).

Table 4.
A greater percentage of CLI elementary schools than of non-CLI elementary schools developed two or more community arts partners across most (>70%) grade levels.

	≥ 2 partners in most (≥70%) grade levels % (*n*)	< 2 partners in most (≥70%) grade levels % (*n*)	Total (n)
CLI	73% (*n* = 30)	27% (*n* = 11)	*n* = 41
Non-CLI	60% (*n* = 26)	40% (*n* = 17)	*n* = 43
Total	67% (*n* = 56)	33% (*n* = 28)	*n* = 84

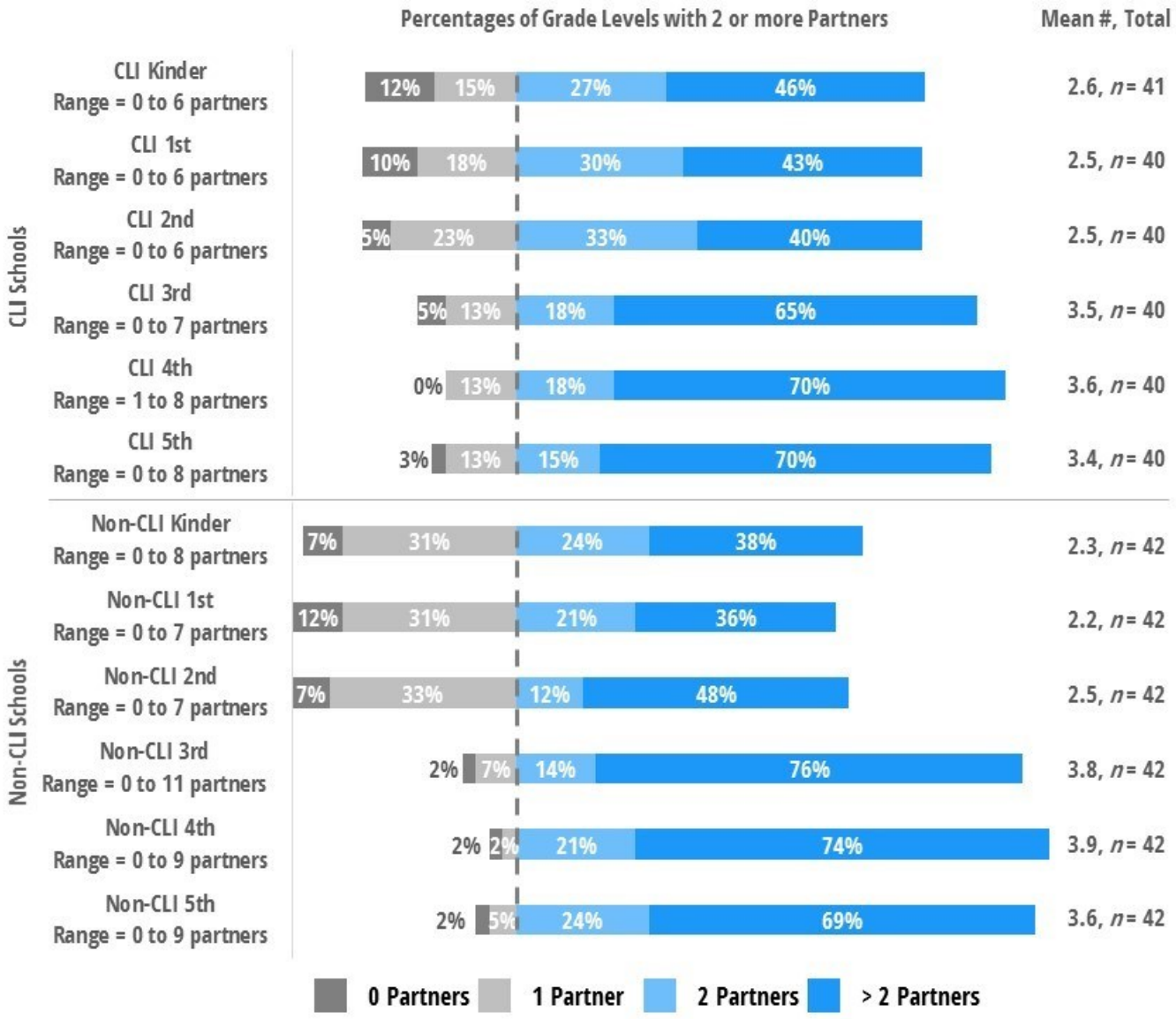
Source. 2016–2017 AISD elementary Creative Campus Inventory

Examination of partnering patterns at each grade level at elementary schools shows that grades 3 through 5 were successfully able to organize two or more arts partners in the majority of both CLI and non-CLI schools. Although it appears that CLI resources may have augmented the partnership work in kindergarten through grade 2, as compared with the smaller proportion of schools organizing two or more arts partners at non-CLI

schools in these grade levels, partnerships in these early education grade levels continued to lag grades 3 through 5 (Figure 31). Because a greater percentage of CLI than non-CLI elementary schools met the arts-rich partnership recommendation of two or more during school partners across most grade levels, it is not surprising that a greater proportion of CLI than of non-CLI campuses met the same arts-rich recommendation of two or more partners within each individual grade level.

Figure 31.

A greater proportion of CLI elementary school than of non-CLI elementary school grade levels met the arts-richness standard.



Source. 2016–2017 elementary Creative Campus Inventory

Community Arts Network Finding 3: All secondary schools struggled to meet the recommendation of having two or more arts partnerships coordinated by non-fine arts departments, but CLI secondary schools did better than did non-CLI secondary schools.

Arts richness at the secondary level required that two or more non-fine arts departments develop during-school arts partnerships. CLI schools developed partnerships with multiple arts partners in slightly more non-fine arts departments than did non-CLI schools. Overall, only two AISD secondary schools met this art-richness standard; both were CLI schools (Table 5).

Table 5.
Across all AISD secondary schools, only two schools met the art-richness standard of two or more non-fine arts departments with arts partners; both were CLI schools.

	≥ 2 non-fine arts departments % (*n*)	≤ 2 non-fine arts departments % (*n*)	Total (*n*)
CLI	14% (n = 2)	86% (*n* = 12)	*n* = 14
Non-CLI	-	100% (*n* = 19)	*n* = 19
Total	6% (*n* = 2)	94% (*n* = 31)	*n* = 33

Source. 2016–2017 AISD secondary Creative Campus Inventory

The distribution of partnerships by coordinating department was examined for CLI and non-CLI schools (Table 6). Although relatively few arts partnerships were coordinated in non-fine arts departments, at both CLI and non-CLI secondary schools, the greatest number of non-fine arts partnerships were coordinated in social studies departments. Partnerships coordinated within fine arts departments were heavily weighted within the music departments at both CLI and non-CLI campuses (42% and 52%, respectively).

Table 6.
Secondary schools established many arts partnerships, but the majority were coordinated within the fine arts departments at both CLI and non-CLI secondary schools.

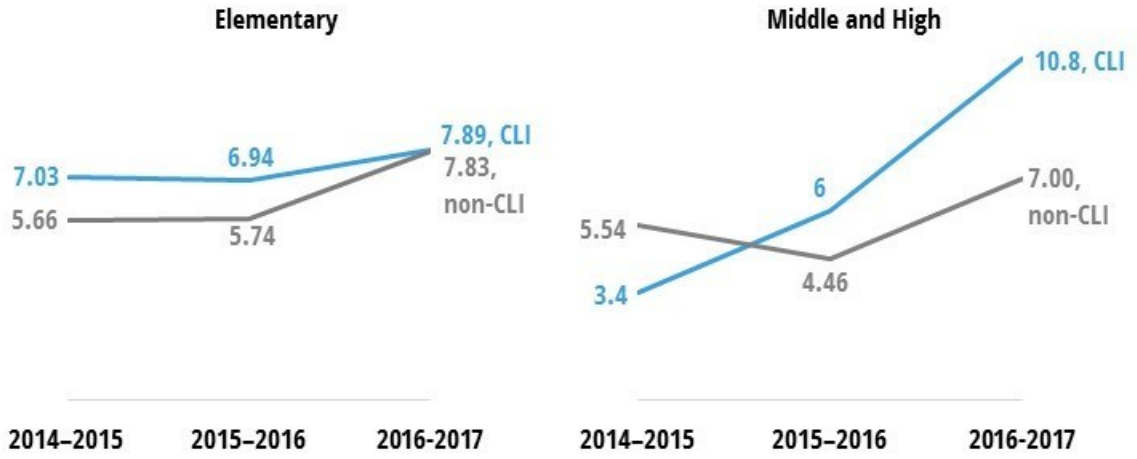
	CLI	Non-CLI
Non-fine arts departments	7% (*n* = 9)	6% (*n* = 7)
English	*n* = 2	*n* = 1
Foreign languages	*n* = 0	*n* = 1
Math	*n* = 0	*n* = 0
Science	*n* = 3	*n* = 0
Social studies	*n* = 4	*n* = 5
Fine arts departments	93% (*n* = 114)	94% (*n* = 116)
Music	*n* = 48	*n* = 60
Visual arts	*n* = 15	*n* = 22
Theater	*n* = 25	*n* = 19
Dance	*n* = 25	*n* = 9
Media arts	*n* = 1	*n* = 6

Source. 2016–2017 AISD secondary Creative Campus Inventory

Community Arts Network Finding 4: The average number of arts partners per school has increased for each group since 2014–2015 but has tripled for secondary CLI schools. However, this is largely due to increases in non-Title I schools that were not matched by increases in Title I schools.

To better understand the context of these patterns, we looked at how the average number of arts partners per campus has changed over the last 3 years (Figure 32). Though this is not an explicit program goal in the campus-based rubric, it is an interesting way to understand trends and make decisions about future implementation. When seen in this way, a large increase was found in the number of arts partners between 2015–2016 and 2016–2017. Several factors might explain this increase: more schools receiving funds from CLI to support arts partnerships, more awareness about the value of arts partnerships, and more facility in finding and coordinating with potential arts partners due to the infrastructure set up by CLI in collaboration with MINDPOP.

Figure 32.
The average number of arts partners per campus has increased in the past 3 years, most remarkably at secondary CLI schools.

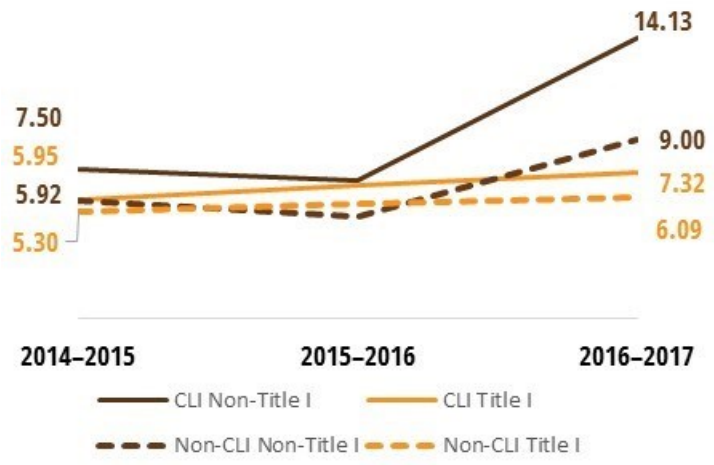


Note. CLI status is based on their 2016–2017 CLI status: elementary $n = 70$, secondary $n = 23$

When we conducted a similar longitudinal analysis of average numbers of arts partner per school, but disaggregated by Title I status, we found that much of the increase seen in Figure 32 was limited to non-Title I schools. At the end of 3-year period, Title I schools had increased their average number of partners, but non-Title I school had almost doubled their average number of partners. In both groups, however, we noticed an advantage for those in the CLI Program (Figure 33).

Figure 33.

Between 2014–2015 and 2016–2017, the average number of school-time arts partners increased at non-Title I campuses and remained stable at CLI Title I campuses; however, both groups showed greater increases when they were CLI schools.

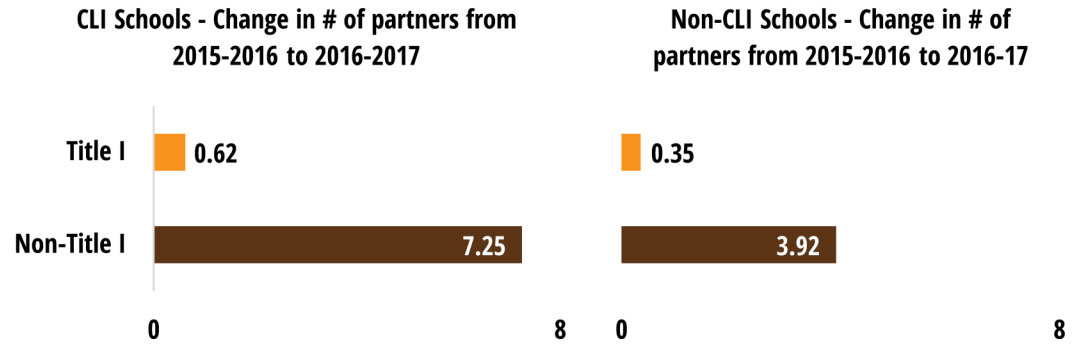


Note. CLI status is based on their 2016–2017 CLI status: elementary $n = 70$, secondary $n = 23$

The notable increase in average number of arts partners per school that happened between 2015–2016 and 2016–2017, particularly for non-Title 1 schools, is surprising because CLI serves a majority of Title I schools, and these trends do not line up with data from previous years (Figure 34). What happened during this time that might have caused so much increase at non-Title I schools? One possible explanation is that the creative-campus profiles were publicly published during this interval. CLI leaders worked with CLI campus principals and creative-campus leaders to identify program goals in the area of arts partnership where they could make improvements in their creative-campus scores. Also notable, non-CLI non-Title I schools had a large increase in their average number of arts partnerships during this period, suggesting they may have made goals based on the rubric, and thereby made improvements on this metric, even without additional CLI funding. More investigation needs to be done to understand how these non-Title I schools were able to make such large strides in a single year, so that we can transfer some of those best practices to the Title I schools.

Figure 34.

Between 2015–2016 and 2016–2017, the average number of school-time arts partners increased at CLI non-Title I campuses and remained stable at CLI Title I campuses. This number remained stable at both Title I and non-Title I campuses not in the CLI Program.

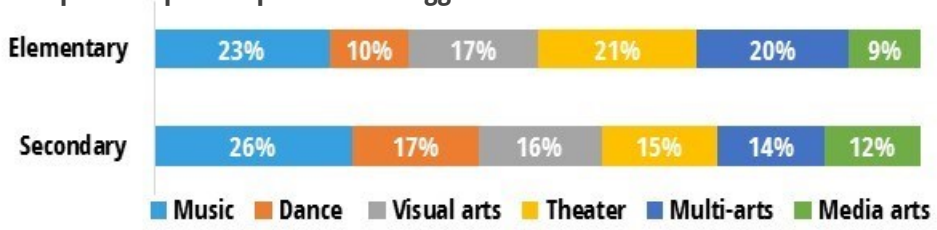


Note. CLI status is based on their 2016–2017 CLI status: elementary $n = 70$, secondary $n = 23$

Community Arts Network Finding 5: Students at CLI campuses had access to more arts partners working in music and less access to arts partners working in media arts at both elementary and secondary levels.

School-time arts partners play an important part in providing students with access to professional performances and exhibition in each art form. For both elementary- and secondary-level partnerships, music was the most represented art form and media arts was the least (Figure 35). In secondary schools, the remaining partnerships were similarly distributed across dance, visual arts, theater, and multi arts. In elementary schools, multi arts and theater were well represented, with dance only representing 10% of the partnerships. Media arts was less represented in partnerships at both school levels but, media arts is a relative newcomer to the fine arts, and because it is still seen by some as belonging more to technical education than to arts education, campuses may have missed reporting on some media arts partnerships.

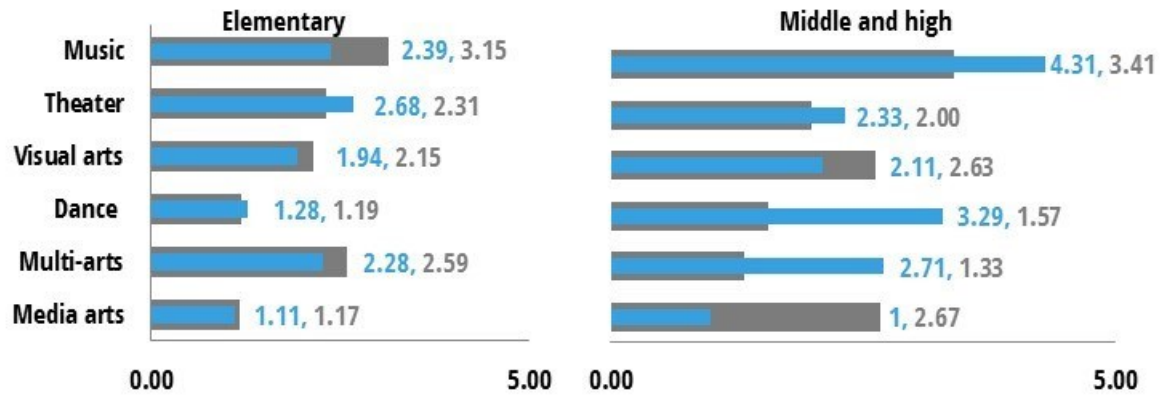
Figure 35.
At both elementary and secondary school levels, the average proportion of music-related arts partners per campus was the biggest of all art forms available.



Source. Elementary/secondary school arts inventory 2015–2016 and 2016–2017
Note. Eight-five elementary campuses and 33 non-CLI campuses were included for analysis.

At the elementary-school level, the number of arts partnerships between CLI and non-CLI campuses was similar in most art forms. At the secondary level, however, differences between CLI and non-CLI schools were more noticeable. CLI secondary schools had more partnerships in music and dance. The biggest growth opportunity area for arts partnerships in the CLI middle and high schools is in visual arts and media arts (Figure 36).

Figure 36.
The average number of school-time arts partners in most art forms was greater at CLI secondary campuses than that at non-CLI campuses but was only greater in theater and dance at the elementary school level.



Source. 2016–2017 AISD elementary/secondary Creative Campus Inventory
Note. Fifty-six CLI campuses and 62 non-CLI campuses were included for analysis.

After-School Opportunities

Community Arts Network Finding 6: More CLI than non-CLI elementary schools met the recommendation of having after-school arts opportunities in at least two art forms available to five or more grade levels.

Overall, 56% of AISD elementary schools offered after-school opportunities in at least two art forms to five or more grade levels; this included 65% of CLI elementary schools and 48% of non-CLI elementary schools (Table 7). The 40 CLI elementary schools averaged about five grades with after school-arts opportunities in at least two art forms, compared with just less than four, on average, at the 42 non-CLI elementary schools.

Table 7.
A greater percentage of CLI than of non-CLI elementary schools met the arts-richness standard of having five or more grade levels with after-school arts opportunities in at least two art forms.

	Schools with ≥ 2 art forms in ≥ 5 grade levels % (*n*)	Schools with ≥ 2 art forms in < 5 grade levels % (*n*)	Mean number of grade levels with after-school opportunities in ≥ 2 art forms
CLI	65% (*n* = 26)	35% (*n* = 14)	5.1 grade levels
Non-CLI	48% (*n* = 20)	52% (*n* = 22)	3.8 grade levels
Total	56% (*n* = 46)	44% (*n* = 36)	

Source. 2016–2017 AISD elementary Creative Campus Inventory
Note. Lucy Read Prekindergarten (non-CLI) and Uphaus Early Childhood Center (CLI) were excluded from analysis of component 4 due to having two or fewer grade levels in pre-K through grade 5.

Community Arts Network Finding 7: CLI and non-CLI secondary schools did equally well meeting the recommendation of having after-school arts opportunities in four or more art forms with two or more ability levels.

Overall, 58% of AISD secondary schools offered after-school opportunities with two or more ability levels in four or more art forms; this included 57% of CLI secondary schools and 58% of non-CLI secondary schools (Table 8). At both CLI and non-CLI secondary schools, more than half of the after-school arts opportunities were offered with four or five ability levels.

Table 8.
An equivalent percentage of CLI and non-CLI secondary schools met the arts richness standard of after-school arts opportunities in four or more arts forms with at least two ability levels.

	Schools with ≥ 4 art forms in ≥ 2 ability levels % (*n*)	Schools with < 4 art forms in ≥ 2 ability levels % (*n*)	Average number of art forms with ≥ 2 ability levels
CLI	57% (*n* = 8)	43% (*n* = 6)	2.9 art forms
Non-CLI	58% (*n* = 11)	42% (*n* = 8)	3.0 art forms
Total	58% (*n* = 19)	42% (*n* = 14)	

Source. 2016–2017 AISD secondary Creative Campus Inventory

Measuring After-School Arts Opportunities

To be arts rich in after-school offerings, all children should have the opportunity to explore and experiment in a diversity of art forms. CLI sets these recommendations at the standard:

- **In elementary schools, five or more grade levels coordinate after-school arts opportunities in two or more art forms.**
- **In secondary schools, four or more art forms are offered after school, each at two or more ability levels (e.g., beginning, intermediate, advanced).**

Conclusion and Recommendations

Two program goals guide the implementation of the CLI community arts network: (a) creation of community partnerships to enrich students' arts experiences during the school day and (b) access to arts opportunities after school. To assess progress toward these goals, we asked the question "How are AISD schools engaging with community arts partners?" CLI is having a positive impact on the average number of hours of arts exposure per student at both elementary and secondary schools. At elementary schools, CLI is helping to create a more even distribution of during-school arts partners across grade levels. At secondary schools, CLI is having a positive, although modest, impact on creating during-school arts opportunities in non-fine arts departments. In terms of after-school arts opportunities, CLI is having a positive impact at elementary schools on creating arts opportunities in multiple art forms across grade levels. At secondary schools, the additional CLI funding for arts partnerships does not seem to differentiate the schools' capability to offer arts opportunities in multiple ability levels. Overall, the financial and programmatic support given to help CLI campuses to secure arts partnerships seems to have had a bigger impact in elementary schools than in secondary schools and a bigger impact for during-school partnerships than for after-school arts opportunities.

Recommendation 1: Develop in-roads for arts partnerships in kindergarten through 2nd grade at all schools. We noticed that while CLI elementary schools had more grades overall with two or more partners, and while CLI elementary schools were more likely than non-CLI schools to have two or more partnerships within each kindergarten through 2nd-grade level, overall, these grade levels were the least likely to have partnerships, regardless of CLI status. We suggest increasing the distribution of information about programs available in this grade band, including stories of successful impacts.

Recommendation 2: Develop in-roads for arts partnerships outside fine arts departments in secondary schools. A commonality between CLI and non-CLI secondary schools was the limited number of partnerships across all non-fine arts coordinating departments. To fill the gaps in partnerships coordinated by non-fine arts departments, we recommend increased development of in-roads to schools for arts partners by increasing opportunities for arts partners and secondary school leaders to develop solutions that overcome barriers, align programming needs, and find opportunities to co-create programs that meet educational goals.

Recommendation 3: Seek sustainable funding sources to support Title I campuses keeping up with non-Title I in terms of equitable access to arts partnerships. Data from this year suggest that publicizing the goals of arts partnerships has helped everyone to foster such experiences for their students. However, Title I schools were comparatively left behind on this advancement. We recommend developing a funding mechanism that helps Title I schools close the gap between schools with less and more advantage.

Concluding Remarks

The CLI is producing measurable gains on its goals to increase access to the arts and creative learning. The initiative has exceeded its projected benchmarks of making all schools arts-rich by 2023 and has made tremendous gains in supporting Title I schools meet arts-richness criteria. AISD has a proportional distribution of Creative Campuses between Title I and non-Title I schools. While the average access for students to the arts and Creative Teaching has increased for all students across the district, the data reveal that non-Title I campus increases outpace increases at Title I schools. Participation in fine arts courses has increased at the secondary level, especially in middle school. The capacity for sustaining elementary campuses to continue providing access to drama, dance, and digital media without full support is noteworthy. Students' access to the rich cultural resources of Austin increased as a result of CLI, with the average number of arts partnerships increasing for all levels. The data suggest CLI benefited students in a variety of ways. Elementary students had significantly better attendance, engagement, and SEL skills when their teachers were more competent in Creative Teaching. Middle school students who completed more arts courses had better academic scores than did those who completed fewer arts courses. Secondary students who completed more fine arts courses had better attendance than their peers who completed fewer arts courses. On balance, the data suggest the CLI is meeting its goals.

CLI has exceeded its projected benchmarks of making all AISD schools arts-rich by 2023, made tremendous gains in supporting Title I schools meet arts-richness criteria, and supported increased access for students to the arts and Creative Teaching.

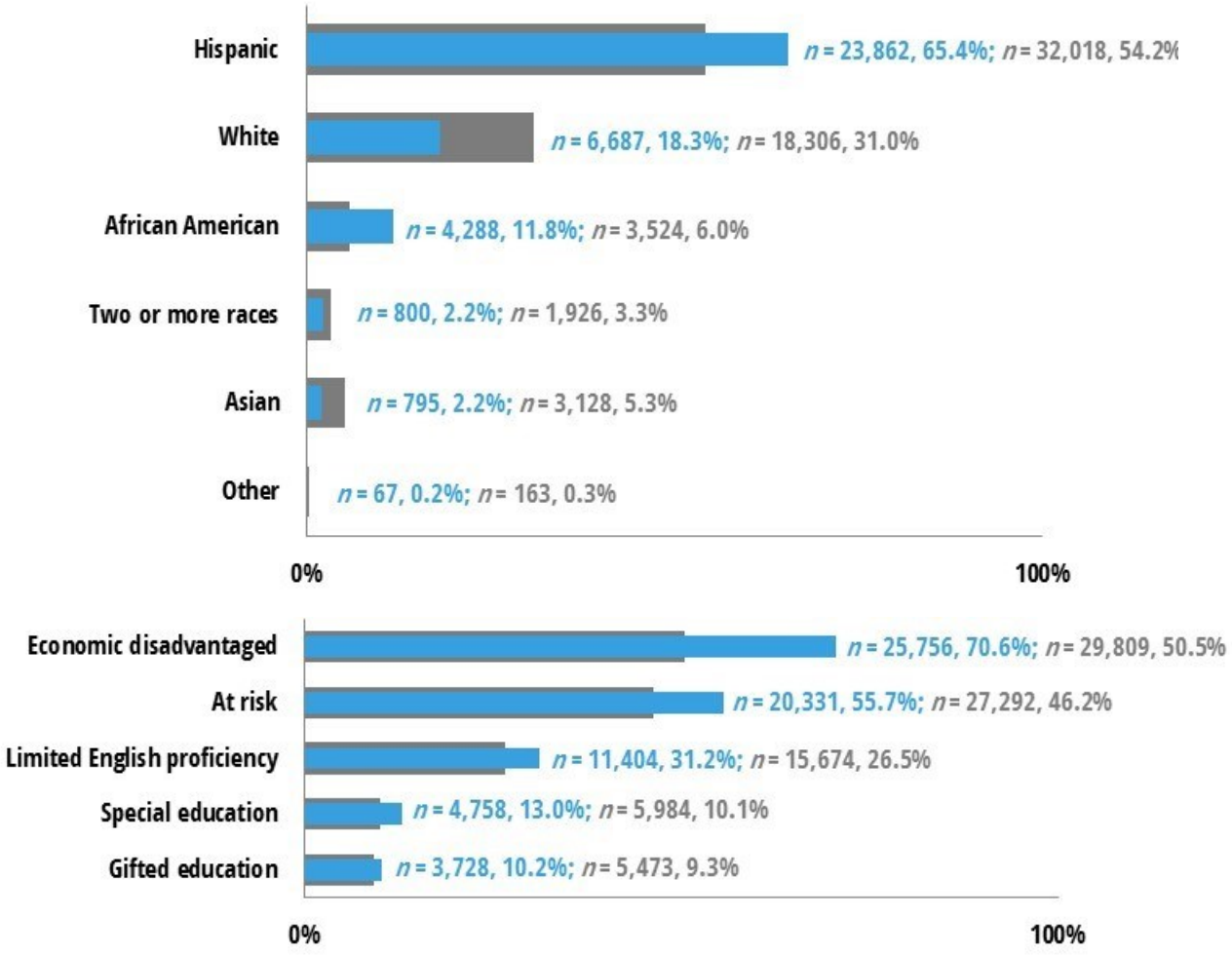
Though this report was published in April, 2018, the vast majority of the data was made available to program staff earlier. They have used the positive findings from this report to celebrate past achievements and inspire future efforts. They have also used the findings to assess program inefficiencies and pilot adjustments to the implementation to strengthen the program. For example, program leaders have:

- Increasingly worked toward integration with academic subject teams and other district initiatives (i.e. special education, SEL, early education, and academic departments)
- Operationalized coaching in Creative Teaching, based on findings, and started to use an interactive data tracking tool to track progress toward coaching goals
- Increasingly shared best practices of sustaining campuses through cross-campus learning walks between sustaining CLI campuses
- Experimented with alternative coaching implementation strategies for secondary schools that maximize already established professional learning communities and department leadership

- Explored opportunities to integrate blended learning into the disseminate professional development resources
- Explored creating micro-credentials to leverage campus-level expertise in Creative Teaching
- Increased the visibility of the creative-campus profiles; the profiles were used with all foundational principals and sustaining creative-campus leaders to creative-campus plans based on the goals of CLI
- Proposed alternative methods for staffing to deliver dance and drama skills at the elementary level
- Proposed an amended rollout schedule to allow for re-staffing configurations and improved delivery systems

The ongoing collaboration between CLI Program leaders, district leaders, and program evaluation will guide future evaluation efforts. Going forward, we will work with the CLI Program leaders in effort to analyze the best practices of the instructional coaches for different types of teachers, highlight inequities in access to the arts at the campus- and student-group level, and co-create a robust set of instruments that can be used to capture arts richness at the campus and district level. Together, we will continue to explore new ways to use measurement to understand and inspire how the district's students experience creativity and beauty in their schools and communities.

Appendix A. Demographics Comparing CLI Students and Non-CLI Students



Appendix B. Instruments for Measurement

Evaluation measure	Subject	Research question addressed
Parent Climate Survey	Parents	1
Student Climate Survey	Students	1-3
Elementary/secondary school arts inventory and Creative Campus Rubric	Campus arts specialists and principals	1-4
Archival student records (attendance, SEL skills, STAAR testing results)	Students	1-4
Archival teacher records (PPfT)	Teachers	2 and 3
Coaching Survey	Individual teachers	3
Coach observation of teachers' Creative Teaching strategies implementation	Teachers being coached	3
Professional development workshop and follow-up implementation surveys	Individual teachers and principals	3
Employee Coordinated Survey	Non-CLI teachers and principals	3

Guiding Research Questions:

1. How much progress has AISD made toward making all schools Creative Campuses?
2. How was sequential fine arts instruction distributed throughout the district, and how did it affect students?
3. How did Creative Teaching affect teacher and student outcomes?
4. How were AISD schools engaging with community arts partners?

Appendix C. Creative Teaching Condensed Rubric

Stage of Creative Teaching cycle	0 - Not using	1 - Beginning	2 - Developing	3 - Applying	4 - Adapting and innovating
Planning Creative Teaching	Teacher **never** identifies or pairs goals and objectives with Creative Teaching strategies OR reflects on the effectiveness of instruction	With **support**, teacher **inconsistently** does **some** of the following: identifies goals and objectives; identifies Creative Teaching strategies; and/or reflects on the effectiveness of instruction	With **minimal** support, teacher **somewhat consistently** identifies AND pairs goals and objectives with Creative Teaching strategies and assesses effectiveness to inform future instruction	Teacher **consistently** identifies AND pairs goals and objectives with Creative Teaching strategies, and assesses effectiveness to inform future instruction	Teacher **fluently** plans Creative Teaching lessons aligned with objectives that include rigorous reflection questions, opportunities for assessment, and build off of previous lessons
Facilitating Creative Teaching	Teacher **never** facilitates Creative Teaching or assesses and adjusts instruction during the lesson	With **support**, teacher **inconsistently** facilitates Creative Teaching and assesses and adjusts instruction during the lesson to engage **some** students in a learning process to promote deeper understanding	With **minimal** support, teacher **somewhat consistently** facilitates Creative Teaching and assesses and adjusts instruction during the lesson to differentiate for **some** students in a learning process to promote student-led inquiry and deeper understanding	Teacher **consistently** facilitates Creative Teaching and assesses and adjusts instruction during the lesson to engage and differentiate for **most** students in a learning process to promote student-led inquiry and deeper understanding	Teacher facilitates Creative Teaching **with fidelity** and **fluently** assesses and adjusts instruction during the lesson to engage and differentiate for **all** students equitably in a rigorous learning process that requires students to use all six Creative Teaching elements to promote student-led inquiry, metacognition and deeper understanding

Appendix D. Elementary Creative Campus Rubric

	Primary component score				
	4	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
Sequential fine arts instruction Number of grade levels (K-6) where most students receive regular music and visual arts instruction	5-6	3-4	2	1	0
Number of grade levels (K-6) where most students receive regular theatre, dance or media arts instruction (at least six meetings with a certified teacher in the area)	3	2	1	Offered < 6 meetings	Not offered
Creative teaching across the curricula Percentage of general classroom teachers who use Creative Teaching strategies or arts integrated instruction **at least once a week**	75-100%	50-74%	25-49%	10-24%	<10%
Community arts partnerships Percentage of grade levels with at least two community arts partners during school time	71-100%	41-70%	21-40%	10-20%	<10%
Average number of hours of arts exposure per student during school time	≥15 hrs	10-14.9 hrs	5-9.9 hrs	1-4.9 hrs	<1 hr
After school Number of grade levels (pre-K-6) with after school arts opportunities in at least two art forms	5-6	3-4	2	1	0

	Additional components	
	Met (Yes = +1)	Not yet met (No = +0)
Community building through the arts Number of campus created arts experiences this year to engage families, faculty, and community	≥8	<8
Leadership Arts goals and strategies are included in the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP)	Yes	No
Communication Frequency of school communication to families about the value of creative learning in person or through print or social media	At least monthly or at least once a semester	At least once a year or Rarely/Never
Professional Development Percentage of teachers who participate in Creative Teaching or arts integration professional development opportunities	50-100%	<49%
Facilities Campus facilities meet the 2008 Fine Arts Education Specifications or sufficiently accommodate arts programming	Meets standard or makes accommodations	

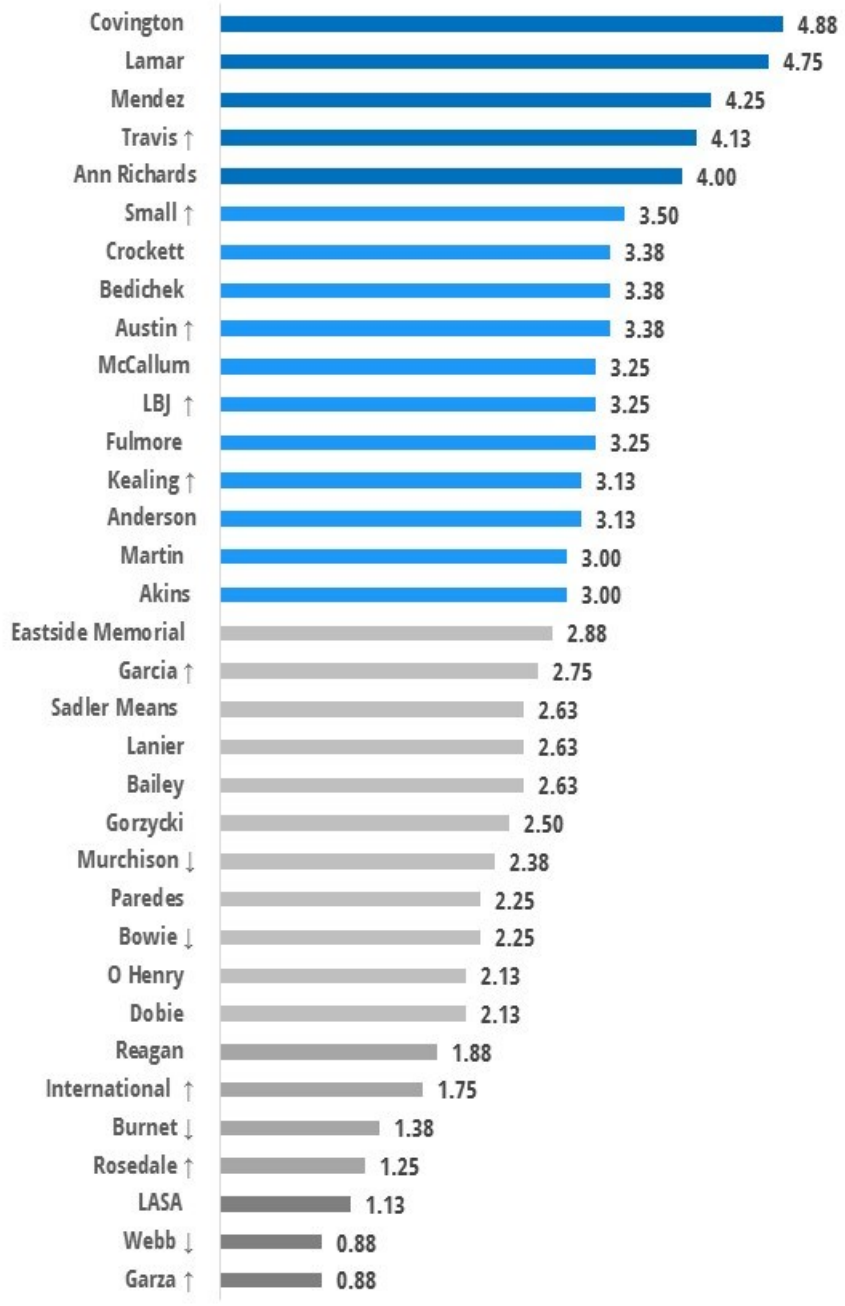
Appendix E. Secondary Creative Campus Rubric

	Primary component score				
	4	3	2	1	0
Sequential fine arts instruction Percentage of students taking the prescribed amount of fine arts classes during their tenure at your school	90-100%	80-89%	70-79%	60-69%	<60%
Percentage of students exceeding the prescribed amount of fine arts classes during their tenure at your school	90-100%	80-89%	70-79%	60-69%	<60%
Creative teaching across the curricula Percentage of general classroom teachers who use Creative Teaching strategies or arts integrated instruction **at least once a week**	75-100%	50-74%	25-49%	10-24%	<10%
Community arts partnerships Departments coordinating arts partnerships during school time	≥2 non-FA departments	1 non-FA department	≥2 FA departments	1 FA department	0
Average number of hours of arts exposure per student during school time	≥15 hrs	10-14.9 hrs	5-9.9 hrs	1-4.9 hrs	<1 hr
After school Number of art forms in which after-school opportunities are offered for more than one ability level (e.g., beginning, intermediate, advanced)	4-5	3	2	1	0

	Additional components	
	Met (Yes = +1)	Not yet met (No = +0)
Community building through the arts Number of campus created arts experiences this year to engage families, faculty, and community	≥10	<10
Leadership Arts goals and strategies are included in the CIP	Yes	No
Communication Frequency of school communication to families about the value of creative learning in person or through print or social media	At least monthly or at least once a semester	At least once a year or Rarely/Never
Professional Development Opportunities Percentage of teachers who participate in Creative Teaching or arts integration professional development opportunities	50-100%	<49%
Facilities Campus facilities meet the 2008 Fine Arts Education Specifications or sufficiently accommodate arts programming	Meets standard or makes accommodations	

Appendix F. Overview of Secondary Creative Campus Scores

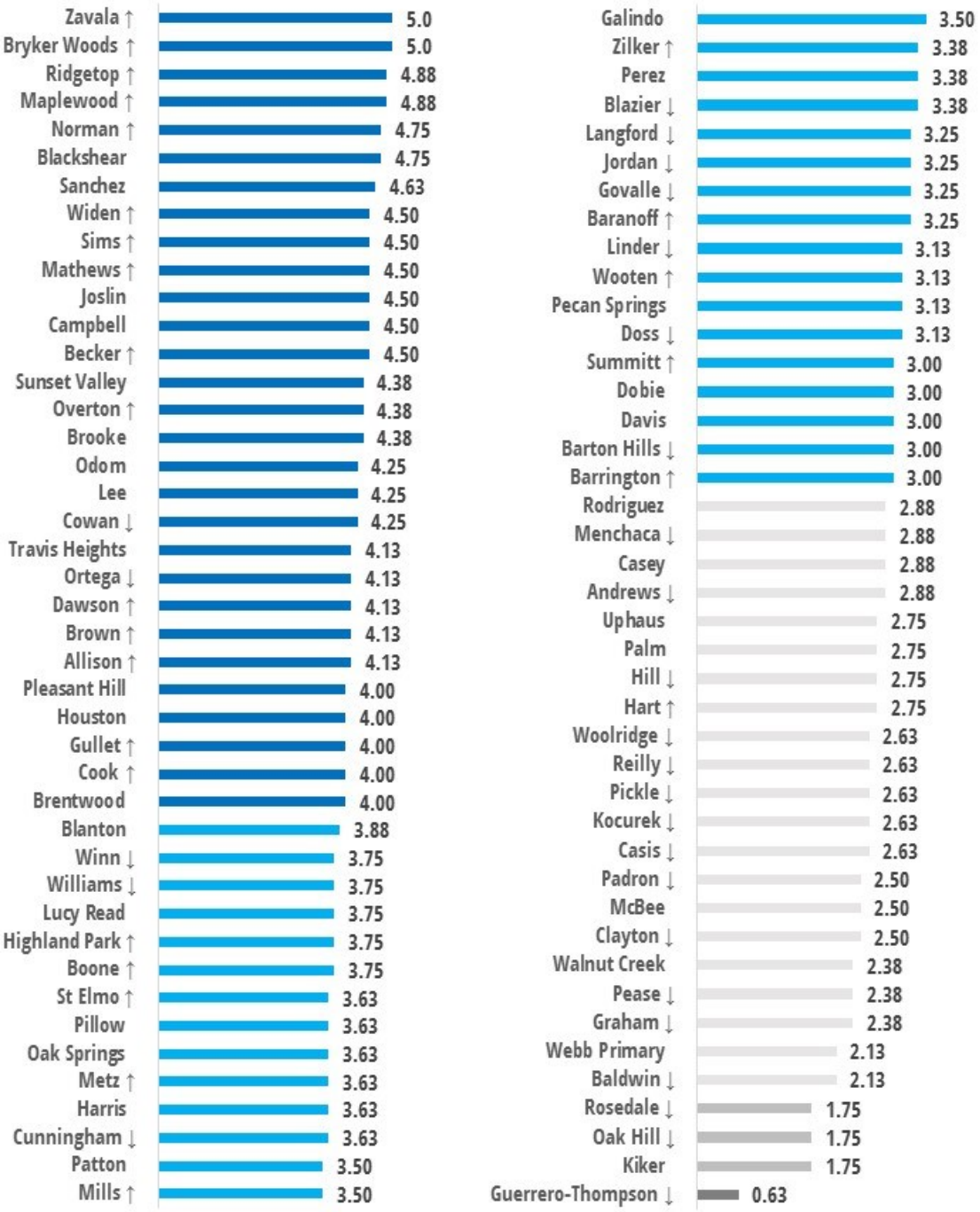
2016–2017 AISD Creative Campus Scores for Arts-Rich, Arts-Involved, Arts-Emerging-1, Arts-Emerging-2, and Arts-Uninvolved Secondary Schools



Note. Arrow after school name indicates a change of more than 1/2 point from 2015–2016. For more information about the change, see the creative-campus profile for that school at https://www.austinisd.org/dre/surveys/2016-2017/creative-campus-profiles-2016-2017.

Appendix G. Overview of Elementary Creative Campus Scores.

2016–2017 AISD Creative Campus Scores for Arts-Rich, Arts-Involved, Arts-Emerging-1, Arts-Emerging-2, and Arts-Uninvolved Elementary Schools



Note. Arrow after school name indicates a change of more than 1/2 point from 2015–2016.

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Austin Independent School District

Authors
Melissa Andrews, M.A., M.Ed, Cinda Christian, Ph.D., Holly Williams, Ph.D., Crystal Wang, Ph.D., John Green-Otero, M.Ed., Brent Hasty, Ph.D., Shaun D. Hutchins, Ph.D.

Department of Research and Evaluation
1111 West 6th Street, Suite D-350 | Austin, TX 78703-5338
512.414.1724 | fax: 512.414.1707
www.austinisd.org/dre | Twitter: @AISD_DRE

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